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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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EDITORS, THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

JANUARY, 1938

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

Economics

ECONOMICS or political economy has been defined as "the science which investigates the production, distribution and consumption of wealth; or the material means of satisfying human desires". It has been called the "dismal science", but the study of "the material means of satisfying human desires" can become an affair of absorbing interest. Let no one imagine that such a subject is too sordid to concern an aspirant towards some "higher life". The light of the firefly is one with the light of the sun. Nature is in essence indivisible. As a banker recently remarked, economic principles cannot be considered adequately apart from moral principles. Any attempt to satisfy human desires uncloses many possibilities of strange and dangerous adventure, for some desires cannot, and others ought not, to be satisfied.

Moreover, the laws of eternal Nature operate as inexorably in the commerce of mankind as in the harmony of the spheres, or the interaction of physiological functions, or the communion of the heavenly host. Long experience has revealed certain elementary economic principles upon which the existence of any social order depends. In so far as we understand them, we are helped to an understanding of cosmic and spiritual principles to which these correspond. At the present time, men everywhere are throwing overboard the accumulated experience of centuries, and are devising schemes to circumvent the "natural law", the *jus gentium* of the Roman jurists, which is indispensable and common to all mankind. Most of these devices have been tried before with lamentable results, and they cannot fail to bring disaster again.

It is the duty of the student of Theosophy to face realities, to combat error, to seek truth. Nowhere is the distinction between truth and error more clearly seen than in the economic domain, where men are constantly forced to choose between honest commerce and one or another form of brigandage. The student of Theosophy who is indifferent to the phenomena of the market-place, is neglecting an opportunity to acquire knowledge.

The Law of Supply and Demand

"Honest commerce" implies the right of the individual to hold and to transfer property. If A possess something which B wants, B can steal it; or he can beg for it; or he can barter, offering in exchange for it something which he himself possesses. Under normal conditions, the exchange of goods or capital or labour, according to the rules of honest commerce, is regarded as a more respectable enterprise than banditry or mendicancy.

But what is honest commerce? According to a venerable standard, it is commerce which is regulated by the law of supply and demand. This law merely affirms the simple fact that the natural price of a commodity is determined by the varying ratio between the quantity which is offered for sale and the quantity which is wanted by buyers: when the supply is greater than the demand, the price falls; when the demand is greater than the supply, the price rises. The price thus determined at any given moment is said to be a fair basis of exchange.

The law of supply and demand functions in conjunction with the maxim, *Caveat emptor*, "Let the buyer beware". This is not an invitation to sharp practice on the part of the seller. It merely affirms that the purchaser should examine what he buys, and that he acts on his own judgment and at his own risk. It is the duty of the seller not to deceive the buyer, but he is free to sell or not to sell at his own discretion and on his own terms,—as the buyer is free to buy or not to buy.

The law of supply and demand is not properly appreciated by people who want to get something for nothing or for less than it is currently worth. It has always been defied, more or less openly, by nations and groups and individuals with predatory instincts. But it cannot be defied with impunity. The financial and social convulsions of the contemporary world are due, in no small measure, to the desperate attempts of nations and organized mobs to outwit the law of supply and demand, and to take what does not belong to them by methods which are not those of honest commerce. Frederick the Great said that one could always find a "philosopher" to justify any villainy. Our institutions of learning are not without doctors of economics who call banditry and mendicancy by other names, and then plead their cause.

The Labourer and His Hire

Intellectuals and demagogues are fond of contrasting what they call "human rights" and "property rights". It is argued that labour is not a commodity; that labour has a right to a living wage; that labour is entitled to a larger share in the proceeds of capital, etc., etc. It might be suggested that labour leaders are almost the only people to-day who treat the labouring man like a commodity. However, whether an individual be a bank president, or a clerk in a grocery, or a founder in a steel mill, he is employed and paid, not because he has a "human right" to employment and a "living wage", but because he renders certain services which deserve a certain recompense. If he fail to perform those services, his employer has no obligation to keep him. "The labourer is worthy of

his hire." When the law of supply and demand operates without too much human meddling, the hire is, as it were, automatically proportioned to the employer's need for an individual labourer. A wise employer is willing, even eager, to divide a larger share of his profits with any employee who is helping him to improve his business. If the employee be really receiving less than his due, he can demand and get better terms from his employer's competitors, or he can set up in trade for himself. If a man's work be mediocre, no one will voluntarily pay him more than he is worth. If his work be valueless, no one will voluntarily employ him at all. This may sound disagreeable to modern ears; but it is in accordance with the natural law, to which Darwin so forcibly called attention, that existence is a struggle which only the fit and worthy survive. "Competition is the life of trade." Emulation, the desire to equal or excel, is a mighty stimulus. In a higher form, it would seem to be indistinguishable from the disciple's aspiration to grow in likeness to the Master. In the life of the ordinary man, the sense of honest rivalry quickens effort and makes him work hard and cheerfully. It is probable that there would be fewer "mental cases" and fewer "unemployables", if employers were more free to deal with labouring men as individuals and were not so often compelled to bargain with them as a class or a group.

The facts are that the superior members of any group or class are necessarily and invariably in a minority, and that, in the field of Labour, it is the more skilled and responsible minority who suffer, both financially and morally, by their forced association with, and domination by, the lazy and less skilled but bullying majority. The avowed aims of Labour (or Trade) Unionism are to abolish competition between workmen; to slow down production to the average performance—which means inclination—of the majority, and to prohibit special rewards for special service or ability. That these aims were given practical effect in Soviet Russia, with the result that production fell to zero, compelling the Soviet dictators to reverse their policy, and to introduce a harsher form of competition than any which capitalism had imagined,—is taboo as a subject of conversation in Labour circles.

The intellectuals and sentimentalists attempt to meet these facts on the ground that it is the average, the "forgotten" man, who needs protection, and that it is their duty, as the saviours of mankind, to see that he gets it, regardless, presumably, of the industrial and racial deterioration involved. But the truth is that the keen competition between employers to secure the best type of labour, affords abundant protection for the average workman, because this competition covers the entire scale of wages, and, in addition, the "working conditions" in one plant as compared with those in another. Thus, thousands of dollars are spent by relatively small corporations to supply iced water during the summer, and, during the winter, the stifling heat which the American workman loves, in order to make working conditions competitively attractive. In the same way, and irrespective of possible gratitude, an employer will create work for an old employee for long after the employee has ceased to be of commercial value, knowing that consideration of that kind will tend to attract

first class men from neighbouring plants. In brief, whenever the law of supply and demand is allowed to take its unimpeded course, it can be relied on to counteract the effects of man's inherent selfishness.

Some of the confusion which exists under this head is due to the misleading use of the term, Labour. The so-called labouring class includes a noisy element who have no intention of working except under dire compulsion. It is an insult to common sense to speak of "the workers", as if they were all alike, as if they did not differ widely as regards skill, industry, thrift and honesty. "Collective bargaining" has not only become a means of sacrificing the superior individual to the mob, but also frequently disrupts the whole economic order by imposing upon the employer a wage-scale which is entirely disproportionate to the services rendered by the employees. His only chance of remaining in business is then to raise the price of his goods to absorb the increased cost of production and distribution. This may mean that he can no longer meet the prices of his competitors, while, if they are similarly situated, and prices become higher than customers are willing to pay, trade stops, and the over-paid employees are no longer paid at all. The extreme depression of the building industries in New York illustrates how trade can be paralyzed by the demands of labour leaders who respect no laws, human or divine.

A Natural Economy

The term, *Laissez faire*, is misinterpreted to-day to mean an easy-going tolerance of evils, but to the school of eighteenth century economists who originally used it, it stood for the proposition that "it is the function of the state so to govern as not to interfere with the natural processes of society and industry". It was based on the theosophic principle that law operates everywhere, and that man's well-being lies in recognizing and obeying natural law, not in trying to contravene it. The idea was developed in protest against "mercantilism", the "planned" economy of the time. The governments of the eighteenth century regarded the "rationalization" of trade and the control of markets as part of their function; and, as always happens under such conditions, the course of prices had become arbitrary and incalculable. Quesnay and his followers held to the truth, demonstrated by experience, that if prices were left freely to shift for themselves in accordance with actual supply and demand, "natural processes" would automatically tend to diminish an excessive supply, and to check an excessive demand. If the price of a commodity were too high, it would stimulate sellers to produce and to offer it in increasing quantity; if the price were too low, production would cease. Thus a "natural economy" would balance itself.

The most cursory observation of Nature justifies this conclusion. Biologists have noted that under natural conditions no species of plant or animal can multiply unduly in a locality, without a corresponding increase in the number of its natural enemies. If there be too many rabbits or squirrels in our fields and woods, we shall witness an invasion of hawks and owls. On the other hand, it is part of the function of hawks and owls, in the biological economy, to

wander from place to place in search of a region where rabbits and squirrels are excessively abundant.

It is a theosophical hypothesis that, on the higher planes of Nature, supply attracts demand and demand attracts supply. Man could not imagine, much less aspire towards a superior consciousness, if there were not in the world an accumulation of spiritual energy to inspire him,—the "deposit of faith" left by all who have attained knowledge and sanctity. The disciple who effectively demands the Master's aid, finds at his disposal an inexhaustible treasure of wisdom and power.

The economic activities of men would, indeed, be simplified, if there were no interference with "natural processes". But alas, man ceased to be "natural" ages before the beginning of what we call history,—which is thus largely the record of his efforts to substitute his own for the Divine will, and of the disasters which he suffers in consequence.

Business Cycles

Whether they like it or not, men are still constrained to live under the dominion of natural laws. Economic processes cannot be isolated from cosmic processes. In economic writings, for example, there is frequent reference to "business cycles". Every known economic order has been subject to fluctuations of fortune, to alternations of good times and bad, which recur with a certain regularity. There exists a notion to-day that these undulations point to defects in the order itself; that a properly planned econo ıy would be permanently stable; that there would be no business cycles in a commonwealth where production and credit were controlled by science. No one will deny that the normal effects of the business cycle are aggravated and modified by human folly and dishonesty; but the cycle itself is part of Nature and depends upon causes, both psychic and physical, far removed from scientific restraint.

Not only the functions of our bodies but the moods of our consciousness change periodically, for we live in a universe which is always in a state of rhythmic motion. Cyclic law governs every detail of our inner and outer existence. Indeed, this is a cause, not for complaint, but for thanksgiving. If it were not so, we should not be compelled to keep awake, to put forth effort. The returning cycles provide the only possible opportunity to learn and profit from mistakes, to test judgment, to grow strong.

One immediate physical cause of instability in any economic order, is the cyclic increase and decrease of agricultural production. Within certain limits, man has been able to reduce the menace of repeated famines, but he cannot prevent the fundamental alternation of abundance and scarcity. This rhythm is determined by cosmic agencies.

For instance, meteorologists are at last convinced that there is a connection between weather changes and the sunspot cycle. We quote from an article in the *Scientific American*, November, 1937, by Dr. Harlan T. Stetson of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology:

H. Helm Clayton, who has spent many long years in the Weather Bureau service, . . . is a firm believer that changes in the sun are accompanied by the fundamental changes in the earth's atmosphere, and has found definite indications that changes in the earth's atmosphere in different parts of the world accompany the appearance and disappearance of sunspots throughout the 11-year cycle. He has not only shown certain definite relations between temperature and sunspots over definite parts of the globe, but he has shown why many investigators have failed to find such a relationship. . . . Dr. Abbot's long investigations of solar variations and weather at the Smithsonian Institute have convinced him that the sunspot period is an important factor in untangling the vagaries of the weather. He finds that the variations in the sun's heat and in the weather really appear to comprise 12 or more regular periods, the most conspicuous of which is a period of 23 years, equal to twice the average sunspot cycle. Observations show that when we are concerned with the electrical nature of sunspots, 23 years really elapse between the recurrence of sunspot cycles of the same kind. The examination of weather records at strategic points, Dr. Abbot says, shows very definitely this long period of weather variation covering 23 years.

Obviously this branch of meteorology is in its infancy, but enough information has already been tabulated to support Jevons's theory that the expansions and contractions of trade and credit are affected by the course and intensity of cyclones on the sun. As sunspots change, so changes the weather, and as the weather changes, crops become abundant or deficient and the buying power of the average mortal increases or declines. While both the farmer and the business-man should prepare in advance for "bad years", nothing can be done directly to alter the situation, for no scientist is likely to discover a way of regulating sunspots; nor should we conclude that sunspot periods are the only cosmic cycles connected with the rise and fall of human fortunes. Man's moods and faculties are no less susceptible than his physical life to all the great tides of Nature.

The immediate point is that business cycles are as natural and as inevitable as the alternation of day and night, winter and summer, waking and sleeping. The law of periodicity is incessant and universal. "The appearance and disappearance of Worlds is like a regular tidal ebb of flux and reflux." We do not begin to suspect the manifold ways in which man affects and is affected by the succession of the cycles, great and small, of the universe. As an Eastern Master has written: "Even simple muscular contraction is always accompanied with electric and magnetic phenomena, and there is the strongest connection between the magnetism of the earth, the changes of the weather and *man*, who is the best barometer living, if he but knew how to decipher it properly."

Booms and Panics

Business cycles come and go, testing courage and endurance and faith. If we were all as wise and as provident as the Patriarch Joseph, we should be able to bear the lean years without undue strain and worry. But men have a fatal capacity for turning success into a South Sea Bubble, and depression into a Black Friday. During the past decade, we have had the privilege of observing and even of participating in a gigantic boom followed by a gigantic panic. It is impossible to blame the weather or any physical variable for what

has happened. At least during the early phase of the panic, Mother Earth was more than usually generous and bountiful. The seat of the trouble was and is unregenerate human nature. Too many people failed, first to stand the strain of pleasure, and then to stand the strain of pain.

As has been said, there was a crisis of spiritual unemployment before physical unemployment became epidemic. The economic collapse reflects a world-wide moral break-down. The law of supply and demand was so outrageously violated by the overproduction of luxuries and by the reckless extension of credit during the era of post-war speculation, that men lost confidence, not only in the stability of values, but in the ability or willingness of individuals to pay for anything which they bought. Even so, the ensuing depression might have cured itself, and confidence might have revived, if there had been a general recovery of ethical standards. Such a recovery has occurred before during periods of financial calamity, and has marked a real turning-point. But where are the signs that a moral renaissance is taking place?

Without doubt, there are individuals who have grown in wisdom and in virtue during these years; but with few exceptions they are not leaders of public opinion. In many respects, the efforts to recover from the depression are more depressing than the depression itself, for they are largely based upon the delusion that prosperity can be restored and made permanent by intensifying, through a "planned economy", those violations of natural law which destroyed it. The resulting incoherence and confusion have weakened still further the citizen's confidence in himself and in others.

Planned Economy

It is everyone's duty to plan his own economy and, sometimes, that of others for whom he is responsible; but he must do this in obedience to law. Joseph was an "economic manager", in the best sense of the term. Let it be noted, however, that he did not prescribe how much corn the farmers of Egypt should plant each year. He let Nature and Providence determine the size of the harvest. He stored and did not destroy any annual surplus. He did not inflate credit to raise prices.

As a matter of fact, the prototype of the contemporary "economic manager" is not Joseph, but the French King, Philippe le Bel, who sought to fill an empty treasury by robbing the Templars, the bankers of his time, and by debasing the currency. This is not the first era which has experimented with managed money and unbalanced budgets, with controlled production and fixed prices, with trade restrictions and confiscatory taxation, etc., etc. If a Roman banker or merchant of the Empire were suddenly to appear in our midst, he might fancy that he was continuing the same old nightmare.

Nightmares can end, for not infrequently the natural forces working for recovery triumph, in spite of all the "plans" of mortal men. But this can happen only when there is a sufficient realization that it is in the long run less painful to co-operate with natural laws than to treat them with indifference or contempt. Recent events in the United States should have awakened many

from their dreams. The Wall Street "panic" of 1937 may serve as an example. Doubtless, there were many reasons why stocks should have begun to decline during the late summer; but it has been evident enough to observers with practical experience that the violence and abruptness of the break were due primarily to the artificial limitation of normal market operations. In theory, the regulation of the Stock Exchange by the Federal Government was intended to protect the investor from the speculator, but in practice it made impossible any normal interaction of supply and demand. As a result the unpleasant experiences of 1929 were repeated. However, this time "it happened that way", not because of the mania of private bankers and speculators, but because legislators and administrators without practical knowledge had so restricted the buying and selling of securities that even prudent investment carried an inordinate risk. As a commentator remarked, "You cannot possibly get more wisdom out of a head than is actually there. A little more humility and a little less arrogance are suggested."

The Case for Individualism

Not many years ago, at least in England and France and America, the average citizen would have vigorously resented the idea that a group of professors or young intellectuals could plan his life and manage his business more wisely and successfully than himself. It is easy to argue that the average citizen is so incapable of administering his own affairs that he should be glad to put them in the hands of anyone who claims superior knowledge. Of course, he should seek and welcome all the help that he can get. But this scarcely implies that it is the proper function of the state to treat all of its citizens alike as if they were wards or incompetents.

It is significant that the *laissez faire* theory, the faith and reliance upon natural law which is to-day so scorned, prevailed during a period when great stress was laid upon the rights and responsibilities of individuals. The nineteenth century was, in particular, an age of great individuals, of genius, not only in commerce and empire-building, but in the arts and sciences, and in the domain of religious experience and pure thought. The individual who malingered or shirked was not regarded with favour by our grandparents, nor would they have found acceptable the doctrine that industry and thrift should be taxed to the limit in order to care for the shiftless and inept.

To-day it is fashionable to accuse the leaders of the nineteenth century of indifference to the needs of the majority of mankind. It is possible that they overestimated the capacity of the ordinary individual to care for himself; that some of them—not all, by any means—did not worry much about the fate of the "underprivileged". Nevertheless, it is invigorating to recall two truths for which the nineteenth century stood, and for which Theosophy stands because they are based upon Nature and common-sense. There is the truth that theory must be confirmed and tested by experience. The best judge of the candle business is not someone who writes a doctor's dissertation upon the subject, but a candle-merchant who has grown up and lived with the business;

as the best judge of spiritual values is the man who daily and hourly seeks to embody them in his life. There is also the truth that individual consciousness is so precious in itself that, in its perfected form, it may well be described as the supreme end of evolution. "The Universe exists for purposes of Soul." Society exists for the sake of the individuals who compose it. It is their duty to learn to co-operate, to recognize that in essence their several selves are undivided fragments of One Self. But the fact remains that no group can become superior unless it produce individuals who are superior themselves, and who, by the force of their example, evoke the superior qualities of others. There can be no *Grande Armée* unless there be a Napoleon to lead it. Christianity becomes a confused mass-phenomenon, perverting truth, whenever it is separated from the living reality of the Christ.

It would seem, therefore, that our economic managers persistently work against Nature, in so far as they suppress both individual initiative and the opportunities for the development of individual responsibility. In economics, as in every department of life, the words of the *Bhagavad Gîta* may be taken as a guide: "Better one's own duty without excellence than the duty of another well followed out. Death in one's own duty is better; the duty of another is full of danger."

The state has its own duties which are arduous enough to kill out political ambition in anyone who has some awareness of his limitations; but it is not more difficult "so to govern as not to interfere with the natural processes of society and industry", than to attempt to govern on the theory that natural processes are immoral and must be reversed. It is the evident duty of the state to frame and enforce laws which are concordant with natural laws; to guard the lives, the property and the honest commerce of its citizens from the murderer and the thief; to prevent the selfish and reckless exploitation of natural resources; to organize and maintain a system of national defence; etc., etc. But, in every instance, these duties are fundamentally concerned with the protection of the individual citizen from injustice and rapine, and, properly performed, would leave him free to work out his own salvation with a full sense of responsibility for the outcome. A country thus governed would produce a race of men,—instead of parasites.

Collective Banditry

Indeed, in practice if not in theory, a state-planned economy is most often merely a system of organized banditry whereby, to curry favour with a group or class, politicians give them a sort of franchise to rob and plunder the rest of the community, or cause the government to do the plundering for them under the guise of taxation. This is manifestly the case in Soviet Russia, where the process of burglary has proceeded so far that the burglars possess all the property and are resorting to the expedient of robbing one another. But the symptoms of collective greed can be observed in nations and groups much nearer home.

Class consciousness is, of course, not reprehensible in itself. A man cannot and should not forget that he belongs by birth and nurture to a certain level in the social scale. However, classes, like individuals, fulfil their respective functions by co-operating, by complementing one another. The class war is a disease of society. Like planned economy, it is not new. There were uprisings of the masses in Athens and Rome; mediæval Europe had its *jacqueries* and peasants' revolts. Then, as now, these mob movements were not spontaneous, but were fomented by dreamers and agitators, and by the tribe of those who fish in troubled waters.

The present epidemic of class envy is none the less distinguished by its scope and virulence. One can suggest various reasons for its rapid spread,—the growth of democracy, the materialistic trend of education, the ease of modern communications, the over-development of city life, the substitution of the machine for the artisan, the recurrent crises of unemployment, etc., etc. But there is evidence that a more subtile force is at work. Modern mass movements, in Russia and Germany and elsewhere, are comparable to the great waves of emotional mania and hysteria, often assuming a religious mask, which have from time to time swept over the globe, changing the course of races and peoples. One recalls, in particular, the torrent of Mohammedan conquest which almost engulfed Europe.

The typical contemporary fanatic is the devotee of some scheme for dividing the property of the "haves" among the "have nots". He has his "scriptures" and his "creed" and his "high priests", his conceptions of orthodoxy and heresy. Like every fanatic, he hates the heretic more than he hates the infidel. Thus the Fascists and Communists—to mention an outstanding example—are as irreconcilable as the Catholics and Protestants who devastated Europe with their wars three hundred years ago. But what are the fundamental differences between them? As far as the individual is concerned, he is almost equally enslaved under either system, although he may perhaps live longer and less uncomfortably under a fascist regime. In any case, there is essential identity of motive,—to appropriate what does not belong to them. Perhaps, as Mr. Walter Lippmann suggests, the fascist powers "have converted the struggle between Haves and Have Nots at home into a struggle between Haves and Have Nots in international affairs", while the Communists still concentrate on the fomenting of class strife within each nation.

However, whatever may be the various phases of collective greed, the modern civilized order is threatened in its very life by a "revolt of the masses" deliberately incited by "intellectuals", and by politicians seeking their own aggrandizement. As Gustave Le Bon has made clear, the individual incorporated in a mob, is capable of crimes which he would not commit in his normal "isolated" state. To-day there are multitudes who seem to have surrendered what little individual character they may have had, and who have, as it were, blended their identity with that of the mob to which they belong. There are thousands of such mobs, or "pressure groups", loose in the world, mobilized for plunder. When they attain their ends through political agents, the result is, as we have

noted, most frequently called a "planned economy". One is reminded of a comment in Petrie's *Revolutions of Civilization:*

> When democracy has attained full power, the majority without capital necessarily eat up the capital of the minority, and the civilization steadily decays, until the inferior population is swept away to make room for a fitter people. The consumption of all the resources of the Roman Empire, from the second century when democracy was dominant, until the Gothic kingdom arose on its ruins, is the best known example in detail.

The Mediæval Conception of Society

The Goths were themselves not averse to loot and plunder when they entered the Roman domain. But after they had become settlers there, they revealed a capacity for hard work which must have astonished the natives who had been living for generations upon the savings of others. The same phenomenon was repeated in many parts of the stricken empire, notably in Gaul after the arrival of the Franks. Thus a new civilization, the mediæval, was born from the ashes of the old, in many ways copied from ancient models, but still essentially *sui generis* and unique. It grew through the accumulation of capital, that is, of goods produced by labour and sacrifice, and used to promote the production of other goods instead of being consumed on the spot.

The Middle Ages had plenty of defects and disadvantages, nor was mankind more immune then than now to vice and brutality and stupidity. But underlying and supporting mediæval civilization, even in its debased forms, was a magnificent idea, a conception of Nature, which lives in its religion and philosophy and art, and which had a profound influence upon the organization of its society.

According to this conception, Nature is a hierarchy comprising all beings in a graduated order from the highest to the lowest. It is the proper function of each being to serve those above it in the hierarchy, and to protect those below. At the summit of this host is the Divinity, the Eternal God, who protects all and whom all should serve; and because the life of all creatures emanates from Him, the least manifestation of that life has a certain dignity, a certain nobility of ultimate origin, which commands wonder and respect.

It is this majestic view of the universe which is reflected in the sculptures of the cathedrals, as it is also mirrored in the constitution of mediæval society which represents an attempt—in part, at least, a conscious and inspired attempt—to imitate in the social order the divine order of Nature. One remembers the words of a Master of the Great Lodge during the last century: "But you must know and remember one thing—we but follow and servilely copy Nature in her works." This sentence might have served as a motto expressing the ideal which the mediæval genius sought to embody.

The guild system, the orders of craftsmen, the feudal hierarchy with the consecrated monarch at its head, were intended to be as interdependent, as complementary, as the divisions of the heavenly host. The extraordinary fact is that although the Middle Ages had what might be called a planned economy, it was an economy planned in subordination, not to personal envy

and fancy, but to a vision of the fundamental nature of things. The primary characteristic of the whole construction is that a place was reserved for everyone who was willing to work and, first of all, to prepare himself for better work by a long apprenticeship. The individual was free to exercise his profession in the state to which it had pleased God to call him. But whether he were a coppersmith or a knight, he was expected to exercise his right to work in conjunction with his duty to serve his superiors and to protect his inferiors.

The religious order, embodied in the Church, completed the secular order. The ideal, as Dante and others conceived it, was that, by the force of contemplation and consecrated action, the religious order should transmit and make explicit to men the design of Divine Nature. The Church failed, partly because it lost faith in its own mission, partly because its leaders were distracted by worldly ambitions. The secular order of the Middle Ages could not survive the collapse of the religious order, for the spectacle of the Divine Hierarchy which had inspired it, faded away.

Moral Rules and Natural Laws

A student of Theosophy can conceive of only one conclusion: men must live by certain fundamental principles, if they are to live at all. There is a "scientific basis of ethics". Moral rules, in so far as they are really efficacious, correspond to natural laws, which are absolute, implacable and immutable. "The things which give birth to harmony and peace", said Spinoza, "are those which have reference to justice, equity and honourable dealing." Nothing which is persistently unjust, inequitable, dishonourable, can endure in the universe.

Certainly there is a distinction between the justice of men and the justice of God. The moral rules which prevail at any time or place, are incomplete, imperfect, subject to constant amendment and improvement. But the basic rules and customs which endure from generation to generation, have the sanction of experience and experiment. They have what biologists call "survival value". Their very persistence testifies to their validity, and measures their conformity to the eternal standards prescribed by Nature for the human kingdom. The modern mind is too often educated to believe that our conceptions of good and evil can be changed at will to suit convenience and expediency. A man can become more just and honourable to-morrow than he is to-day, because he is capable of expanding infinitely his understanding of the ideal of justice. However, the growth of understanding is an organic process, including in each successive increase, the essence of all past discoveries of truth. The gentleman has a more refined standard of honesty than the ordinary man; but he does not reject what is worthy in the ordinary man's standard; he does not regard petty larceny as justifiable merely because his ideal of honour does not condone modes of behaviour which seem to others innocent and harmless.

An individual or a society, which deliberately despises the laws of Nature revealed by experience, must repent or perish. If our civilization finally lapse into such chaos that no endeavour of God or man can save it, it will be de-

stroyed, and a new civilization will take its place. But let us have no illusions. This "new world", if it come, will not be a "new deal". The natural law of all "worlds" is the same, without change or turning, now and for ever.

The Firm Establishment of the Law

There are the words of Krishna in the *Gîta:* "Whenever there is a withering of the law, O son of Bharata, and an uprising of lawlessness, then I manifest myself. For the salvation of the righteous, and the destruction of such as do evil; for the firm establishment of the Law I come to birth in age after age."

According to a universal tradition, the "Gods" intervene actively in the affairs of men when there is a grave crisis of civilization. Theosophy identifies these "Gods" with the Masters of the Great Lodge, the élite of humanity, the assemblage of those who, like the Buddha and the Christ, have conquered unwisdom and mortality, and who labour, century after century, to lift mankind towards their own state of freedom and enlightenment. But they labour in vain, unless individuals living in the world respond to them. It is the theme of the scriptures of all races and ages, that the "Lords of Compassion" are in desperate need of helpers on the plane where we live.

If a sufficient number of individuals answer the call of the Great Lodge to-day, the mediæval dream of a spiritual order within and above the secular order can be realized, in a degree which Dante himself could scarcely have imagined as possible. The vision of the Divine Hierarchy, the model for all earthly societies, would be renewed and clarified. But one may suggest that between the mediæval dream and the reality, there must be this distinction: the members of a real spiritual order are—if we understand correctly—not necessarily recognized as such by the world, nor are they necessarily withdrawn, save in the freedom of their spirit, from the world, nor do they, in any sense, constitute a "vested interest" like the mediæval Church. The outer activities of the "spiritual man" may frequently be indistinguishable from those of the "secular man". It is part of his purpose to touch the commerce of mankind, even in its humblest and most commonplace details, with the spirit of consecration. Nothing that can become just, equitable and honourable, not even our daily business of buying and selling, can possibly be a matter of indifference to the soul. How can there be a "firm establishment of the Law", unless the soul, the *Higher Self*, be in command of all the inner and outer activities of the human being?

Someone will say: "But there is so little that I can do". There is something which everyone can do. Surrounded by false ideas, he can seek and find true ideas and embody them. He can begin almost anywhere, even with economics, as we have tried to show. "There is no Religion higher than Truth." What can limit the power of a true idea, firmly held in the mind, to affect the thought currents of a century? A glorious opportunity to work for and with the powers of the Spirit is open to anyone who loves truth and righteousness more than he loves his life.

FRAGMENTS

THERE are dark days, saith one, days of an intolerable sadness; days of exhaustion both of mind and body, the exhaustion of a ceaseless conflict, of a steadily losing battle. The whole nature becomes numb, steeped in an overwhelming gloom. There is need for swift, decisive action, and no least idea what that action should be; or all the mistakes and blunders of the past seem tied in inextricable knots about one's feet, making the required action appear impossible. And when in answer to the desperate cries of our hearts only the mocking echoes of them return to us, we are tempted to despair.

Who has not known the bitterness of such hours! None, save those who have never lived.

But, O soul, be not deceived! Here lies thine hour of glorious opportunity; in it is wrapped the answer to all thy prayers, the gift of gifts thou so long hast coveted, the priceless pearl thou knowest well to be worth all other possessions.

Look for the Warrior, eternal and sure; let him fight in thee. *He is thyself*, though he has been buried hitherto beneath the rubbish of thine ordinary life. This is his hour—his hour to awake and live; therefore thine hour also to live.

Thus thinking of him, dost thou not feel him stirring within, girding on his armour; does not thy pulse begin to beat with his, full of ardour for the conflict, full of power to conquer—the power of the Grace of God? He beholds the legions of angels that support him, he sees the Great Commander who smiles triumphantly and beckons. Go thou with him, confident, unafraid. Go to victory by his side remembering that he is thyself, even while the mists of life, like blinding tears, obscure thine eyes, and the truth is hidden from them. He is eternal truth, and that truth shall make thee free. So at the day of the great peace, the peace that comes when thou hast "entered", thou shalt know, in joyous certainty, that which perhaps is only faith to-day,—his oneness with thee; for all faith in Reality brings its sure reward in realization.

Join step beside him as the swinging ranks march forward radiant in the light that shines from the Master's face. Thy conflict is the Warrior's conflict, and his conflict is the Master's. To that thou must go with heart aflame to win for Him the Day of His Great Peace.

CAVÉ.

WAR

The Lord is a Man of War

NEITHER war nor religion can be understood unless it be recognized that the human spirit seeks and serves values dearer to it than comfort, or life, or any personal gain. The decline of religion and the increase of pacifism are twin phenomena, each arising from the mind's failure to hold to the spirit's loyalties, and the consequent mental deification of ease and security. Good and kindly people are particularly prone to such perverted humanitarianism, which belies the essential and deepest characteristic of humanity, and it has become one of the definite occupational diseases of professional social workers. But even those who shun sentimentality, and whose pacifism is anything but cowardice, either for themselves or for those they love, still indulge in very wishful thinking regarding war; and from this, movement after movement arises, all of them admirably intentioned, but all of them inviting, by their declared unwillingness to fight, the very evils they are designed to avoid. Their proponents argue that as men have outgrown personal, physical combat, so nations should do the same, learning to settle their "disputes" as do private individuals. They would have everything settled by reason and law, by courts and conference, commissions and compromise. They refuse to face the ugly facts of the existence of evil and lunacy, which will recognize reason only as it may be made to further their unreasoned ends, and which, having in heart and will broken the moral law, will respect no other, nor be restrained by any pacts, nor anything but force. Those who have once faced these facts, whether in their own nature or in the world around them, can never again use the language of pacifism. The warfare between good and evil, madness and sanity, in which all that the soul values is assailed and put in mortal jeopardy, cannot be viewed as a "dispute"—the word loved of pacifists —that can be hushed by "getting together" around a tea table, reconciled by conference, or compromised by concessions. It is war.

> And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not: neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, . . . and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Blessed are the peacemakers. But it is only so that peace can be made. It can exist only in the heart that has warred against the hosts of evil in itself, until it has cast them out as something other than itself. Then, when their place is no more in the heart but outside it, when the warfare is externalized as with a recognized and foreign foe, then in the heart of the warrior is peace.

So long as there is evil in my own nature, there must be war there. So long as selfishness, for example, makes me prefer my own good to another's, so that I am willing to seek advantage for myself at the expense of others, there is something in me which is in rebellion against the divine Law, something which wars against my divine nature and violates the sanctities of my soul. Against it my soul must war, or stultify itself. This being the inner reality, its inverted image must be projected upon the screen of outer manifestation. There must be occasions prompting me to selfishness, which array, in sharp conflict, the good and evil in me. And if the evil triumph habitually, silencing conscience, so that I identify myself with my selfishness and follow its promptings, it is only that which hurts my selfishness that can restrain me. I will listen only to fear or force; for my whole attitude proclaims my rejection of morality.

This, which is so clearly obvious in the individual, is equally true of nations. So long as there is the selfishness that prefers what it deems self-interest to divine Law, it will not be held back by any theoretical respect for human law. It will take what it wants for itself, callous to the harm it works to others, unless it be restrained by fear or force,—fear prompted by the show of force. The exertion of that force is war; and the choice is restricted to it, or to submission to evil, unless the force on the side of the Right be so overwhelming and at hand that the mere show of it commands surrender. "When a strong man armed, keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace." But when a stronger come upon him, or one who thinks himself such, then there is war. There can be no escape from war, no substitute for force, in the life of the Spirit. "The Lord is a man of war."

Let us assume that there is a lunatic at large. Selfishness, that is willing to go the lengths of robbery and oppression and murder to gain its supposed good, is in itself a kind of lunacy. There is no use arguing with a lunatic. He may be but temporarily insane, but while his lunacy is on him, there is but one thing to do: you must restrain him. You must capture and confine him, for the protection of those he would victimize, and for his own protection against himself. After he has been restrained you may try to cure him. You may get the best of doctors—and it may be hoped they will be something more than vague sentimentalists—but while he is mad you will not put trust in his words, unless you, too, are mad. He is mad so long as he is bent on breaking the moral law. While he will contravene that, he will contravene everything but force.

Consider Mussolini. Having done much for Italy, his accomplishments and position went to his head. It was inevitable that they should have; for he was never consecrated, and the sequence he followed has been the course of unconsecrated power through all of history,—ambition growing with achievement. Partly from an innate and ardent patriotism, in the belief that it would be for Italy's good, in providing raw materials, the ability to expand, and an opportunity for needed economic recovery; partly to take the country's thought from its internal difficulties, and thus to safeguard his party position; partly confusing self with country,—he starts his raid on Ethiopia, to see how far he can go.

England, which has a sense of justice (when her own self-interest does not lead her to abandon or deny it), made her gesture in the Mediterranean. But in doing it, she revealed both to herself and to Italy that she was not ready, was not prepared, either in her armament or in the temper of her people, actually to fight. Geneva considered and conferred and voted, but even more than England made it clear that Italy need fear nothing from the League. And Mussolini, seeing these things, called England's bluff, and pressed on to a complete conquest, far beyond what he had at first deemed possible. Ethiopia was slaughtered, while Eden shuttled back and forth, and Geneva talked.

Mussolini was not restrained by pacts. Italy had signed the Briand-Kellogg pact outlawing war, and had pledged herself at Locarno, and to the League, and in many "gentlemen's agreements". Germany was not restrained in 1914 by her pledges to Belgium. Japan is not restrained to-day in China. No country, dominated by a selfishness that is exalted above justice and the moral law, has ever been, or ever will be, restrained by written agreements or formal treaties,—for the only authority of these is in the moral law which is itself defied. The only restraint the lunatic recognizes is that of force.

The lesson has been written too large to be misread. It was the pacifism that dominated Geneva, the ghastly pretence that words could be substituted for deeds, the inability or unwillingness of England and France to resort to force in the Mediterranean, that caused Ethiopia's overthrow. Ethiopia trusted in law, in pacts, in the League, in covenants, in avoidance of offence, in justice and sanity,—in all that the pacifists rightly maintain should rule the dealings of men and nations; but which never will, while justice and sanity seek "peace" with militant evil and lunacy. Similarly, in China, Japan knows that no force will be brought against her, save China's own; and Japan deems herself stronger than China because better armed and better prepared. So notes are exchanged interminably, and Japan presses on. Had England and France been armed and ready, had the Mediterranean been stiff with their warships, the sky black with their air-planes, Egypt garrisoned, Malta impervious, and the French and English people equally prepared in spirit and ready to fight, there would have been no need to fight. Before such a show of force, and the conviction that, if need be, it would be used, Mussolini would have withdrawn. There would have been no war, either in Africa, or the Mediterranean, or in Europe—in all probability not even in China. Ethiopia would have been saved, the League saved, justice and respect for pacts and the given word, saved.

From it all, one good thing has come, since even evil is turned by the great Lords of Karma ultimately to its own undoing and the service of the good. England, in her humiliation, has learned, or at least begun to learn, her lesson, and has started to arm. By this she has done something to atone for Italy; for it was Italy that taught her, and the good Karma of this gain in England's wisdom is therefore Italy's.

Thus over the whole world it has been written that so long as there is evil in the hearts of men and nations, it will work its way, unless there be force to resist it, and the willingness to employ that force. It is a mistake to think

that in their individual relations men have outgrown the need for force—the tacit, if not explicit, premise upon which so many pacifist arguments are based. Behind the courts and the law there stand the police, the militia, the army, and without these to *enforce* the law, the courts, and the law itself, would be useless and impotent. And the police, let it be remembered, must not only be ceaselessly vigilant, but must be ready at any instant to meet force with force, to put duty before anything of self, and, if need be, to take the lives of others or to lay down their own, that the law may be preserved inviolate. Some talk as though an international police force could be armed with night sticks, or merely with white gloves as a symbol of "authority". They must be an army, ready at any moment for war, better armed, more powerful, more ready to exercise force, than the army of any nation, so that no nation could stand against them.

There are two kinds of preparedness and force, material and spiritual. Both are needed. There must be both arms and the willingness to use them, to kill and to be killed when necessary. It is useless to be armed if you advertise to all men that you are unwilling to use your arms, that they are no more than a show, and that when faced by one who will respect nothing but force, you will "back down", seek compromise, resort to many words and pretexts for doing nothing.

This brings us to the Christian pretexts, which so belie Christ's life and character, taking from their context his teaching to his disciples for their conduct towards each other. But even so, it is the soldier, rather than the pacifist, who interposes his cheek to the blow of evil, that it may not fall upon the innocent. It is rare that the soldier fights primarily in defence of himself. If it be his own safety and welfare that dominate him, the chances are large that he would never have enlisted, or that he will run away, and will fight only when, like a rat, he is cornered and can run no further. The soldier does present his own cheek to be smitten, rather than let the blow fall on women and children, the helpless and the wronged. And if he be not willing to do this, it will be sensed by others, most directly and surely by those whom he should oppose, and no matter how powerful be his material armament it will avail him nothing. He is not "prepared"; his spirit is a coward spirit; he will be brushed aside, and evil will pass on and triumph, as though he were not there.

If we are still in any doubt of this, we need do no more than look back over our own diplomatic correspondence of the past months. On September 5th, the headlines of the *New York Times* proclaimed our foreign policy with regard to Japan's continued invasion of China. "Firm Tone is Taken. Far Eastern Policy Aims to Impress Japan, Reich and Italy. Pacts' Sanctity Backed. Washington Would Show the Militarists They Can't Win Objectives by Default. But Resolute Attitude Does Not Seek to Lead This Country One Inch Toward War." In view of that last sentence, just what does all the rest mean? What attention should be paid to a "firm tone", a "resolute attitude", a "sterner purpose" (as set forth in the text from Washington), which it is proclaimed, with most unmistakable sincerity, will under no circumstances

be backed by force? Japan's answer was, none at all: and so was Italy's, and Germany's.

It can, at least, be said of England that she was stung by her humiliation. So far, we have remained serenely oblivious of ours. The shining self-complacency of Washington continues to beam, unspotted and undimmed, upon the world.

At basis, therefore, outer war will be necessary just so long as there is inner war between good and evil; for the outer world is but the projection of the inner. The soldier is he who subordinates safety, comfort, self-interest, to the furtherance of a good he puts above self, and for which he is willing to die. If he is willing to die for it, he will not turn from it for any pleading of self. If he be not willing to die for it, the enemy will sense the existence of his limits, and, pushing him to them, will triumph over him. If England arms merely in self-interest, Mussolini has but to manœuvre properly to gain once more his own way, making it seem to England's advantage as well as to Italy's.

War, as we set forth in the beginning, thus compels man to face the fact that there are spiritual values that transcend all material values—things dearer and of greater moment to him than his own existence. He can fight only in that realization, and that realization and temper are an essential part of armament and preparedness. No man can achieve the triumph of right who sets limits to what he will suffer in defence of it. To realize that war is of this character is to be lifted for ever beyond the contemptible futility and cowardice of the pacifists' "neutrality" and effort to reduce all conflict to the level of "disputes". The "dispute" between the gangsters and the bank they shoot up and loot; the "dispute" between the kidnapper and the baby or his tortured parents; the "dispute" between the criminal lunatic and the child he attacks and murders. It is not the teaching of Christ that other children be offered the madman as another cheek, to appease his murderous lust.

To expect suffering, hardship, loss, difficulty, death, for oneself and for those we love, to face this and to go forward without fear or anxious foreboding, cheerful and happy and enjoying to the full the good we meet, resolved to deal rightly and manfully with whatever we encounter, but by nothing to be turned aside—this is the temper in which life should be approached and lived. It is the temper of the chêla, and of the soldier. It is the temper of the soul that has been forged in the Master's warfare. G.B.

He who runs away from one cross will meet a bigger one on his road.—PHILIP NERI.

CYCLIC LAW IN BIOLOGY

THERE is an aspect of the theosophical teaching which, in view of the present condition of the world, has, I am sure, occupied a prominent place in our thoughts of late. It is the doctrine of cycles. Almost at the beginning of the Movement we find it assuming a leading position in the Theosophical philosophy. Sinnett had questioned one of the Masters about the curious uprush of civilization which seemed so remarkable in the recent history of the West, and the query called forth a highly interesting explanation of the law of cycles as it applies to changing civilizations. Later came the fuller teaching about rounds and races. We know too, that various scholars, notably Flinders-Petrie, Spengler and Berdyaev, have offered a similar interpretation of the rise and decline of nations, which, like organic beings, appear to traverse a natural cycle of birth and growth to be followed by decline and senility.

For us the subject receives an added and poignant interest from a definite remark made by Mr. Judge in *The Ocean of Theosophy* where, in a general discussion of cyclic law, he pointed out that a cycle was ending in 1898, and that the new one destined to succeed it would be marked by social or geological changes, or perhaps by both. There are hints in Madame Blavatsky's writings too, of ominous things waiting for humanity around the corner of the Century to come: things that might be measurably warded off if the theosophical philosophy, and above all the theosophical life, could become widespread, breaking the grip of materialism, ameliorating the moral atmosphere, and giving men a rational basis for ethics.

To-day we are living in the world which our leaders saw approaching, and while it would be rash to say that their hopes have not and cannot be realized, yet, on the other hand, nothing is to be gained by refusal to face the facts, or by adopting a fatuous optimism in regard to what is going on to-day in Western civilization. It hardly looks now as though that civilization were destined to be a heaven in the twenty-first century compared to what it was in the nineteenth, as Madame Blavatsky had hoped that it might be.

Our Theosophical body is a small one—betrayals and traitorous attacks have seen to that. The organism born of the Lodge was weakened, and was not able to do the work it might have done otherwise. But, weak or strong, The Theosophical Society faces the future, and assuredly anything which can help its members to a clearer understanding will be so much to the good.

At the outset let us ask if Mr. Judge's words are in process of fulfilment. What about the impending geological changes? Is there any evidence that such are in action about us? Floods? We have had them before, all through our history. Open winters? There is nothing particularly new about that. However, there is one meteorological fact that may possess significance in this

connection. I refer to the recurrent droughts and dust storms in the West. In itself it may seem a phenomenon merely temporary and local, but taken in connection with a note which recently appeared in the journal, *Asia*, it conceivably takes on another colour. For it is reported there that rainfall has been increasing in the Gobi Desert to such an extent of late years that the nomad inhabitants are thinking of agriculture. Quite possibly the two details are related—perhaps the wind currents are shifting, so that the drought of our Western country is counterbalanced by increasing precipitation in Asia. Meteorologists begin to suspect that comparable climatic shifts are rather frequent. For example, the Arizona-New Mexico region, as attested by the remains of aboriginal settlements, must have borne a much denser population in quite recent historical times than it could now possibly support, and Yucatan, at present a place of pestilent swamps and strangling jungle, could hardly have developed a vigorous and healthy people if its climate in earlier centuries had been that of the same region to-day.

But without stressing the geological phase any further, let us pass to the other aspect of Mr. Judge's words. Do I need to bring forward evidence to prove the fact that social changes of enormous magnitude have appeared since the century opened? Nations are falling under ruthless dictatorships and reverting to paganism; they are carrying on bloody civil wars, and flaming out into struggles between employers and employed. We see a bewildering chaos where the lines between good and evil are often so vaguely drawn that one's sympathies are tossed back and forth. We are distressed by the vacillation which marks the official policies of those whose duty it is to carry the banner of the White Lodge. The children of evil so often seem to be wiser than the children of light. They at least know what they want and go after it.

So the great social change which Mr. Judge predicted is in process of accomplishing itself. Do we possibly discern also the grim outline of the *Terreur* to which Madame Blavatsky referred?

Mr. Johnston used to call H. G. Wells a psychic. Now a psychic often senses more strongly than other people just the sort of storm which is now raging, and in recent book reviews we are notified of Mr. Wells's latest lucubration. He has discovered that fear is invading the world—a fear that drives men to madness because they have finally realized that they cannot chain the "cave man", and that the *Terreur* is approaching. As the reviewer shrewdly says: what matter whether we call it the cave man with science, or the old Adam of theology—the fact remains a fact. Mr. Wells has been pretty accurate before now in catching wireless waves from the particular region of space on which he "tunes in", and we may add his testimony to what our own healthy senses report.

If this be true, if civilization, indeed, is disintegrating under our eyes, it will profit us in the first instance to learn what we can about the laws under which such movements occur, and, in the second place, to examine the means by which a rout may possibly be converted, at least in part, into a final victory. I cannot hope to cover the subject exhaustively. I have not the time, and far less, the knowledge requisite for such a task. But I can, perhaps, bring a

small contribution from the field of biology to bear on the problem; and so I propose that we should examine the principles which underlie other organic cycles where the curve of development is more fully and more clearly revealed. For the law of cycles is universal; it pertains to all organic systems. One and all, they rise from small beginnings, increase in power to their maturity, and then decline into old age and death. The upcurve involves active assimilation and growth; the downcurve is characterized by dissimilation and dispersal of energy.

Now when we speak of organic systems, we do not refer to plants and animals only. It is becoming increasingly apparent that the concept of organism must be extended to include the totality of manifestation. The manifestation may be physical or metaphysical; it may compass a solar system or a sunflower or the genius of a nation. All existences, everything which can be seen and touched, everything which can be thought of as formed or unformed, are living and organic. If we allow the expression, "organic evolution", to apply specifically to the phyletic development of plants and animals, it is only a concession to an unfortunate historical accident which led our scientific predecessors to draw an unwarranted distinction between the realms of the living and the non-living. Such, then, is our first proposition: that all systems are living and organic, and that all systems are in process of evolutionary development.

To this proposition we must add the concept of "holism". All organic systems are multiple in their structure, yet within the multiplicity lies an overruling unity. As we often phrase it: "There is a unity behind the manifested diversity." So a man's body or a plant's body is a diversity of functioning parts, harmonized, integrated and ruled over by a governing centre. And these parts in their turn are wholes. The hand—a part of the body—is an elaborate combination of muscles, bones, nerves and blood vessels, all effectively serving the function of prehension. Moreover, though they may be definitely subordinated to the higher whole, each one of them possesses a peculiar autonomy and is relatively independent in its rate of evolution.

Two familiar tendencies express themselves in every organic system. One is centripetal; it is the urge toward sloth and the continued repetition of a familiar activity along well-worn grooves of habit. It comes out of the past; it rests in life already experienced; it resists the expansive pressure of the life-impulse. It may come into almost complete control, whereupon life stagnates and consciousness sinks into automatism. There are numerous examples of delayed races among the plants and animals. The brachiopod *Lingula*, for instance, has been repeating itself in the mudflats of Chesapeake Bay since the Cambrian Period. The molluscs, the crustacea, the starfishes, and dozens of other such minor races still run their weary cycles but appear to go nowhere.

But the centripetal tendency is matched by its opposite which constitutes the other pole of the dualism. This is the centrifugal tendency; it moves into the future; it drives the organism toward the new and the untried. Western civilization to-day is suffering from a highly explosive excess of this power, which reveals itself in an abnormal tendency of the elements to escape from holistic control and to drive apart. It is here that we come face to face with

a certain theory of government which is now centred in Washington. The Theosophical Society does not enter into politics, but it has a perfect right to examine political systems from the basis of the principles upon which they rest. The present movement in government is hailed by the so-called liberals as progress. I do not believe that it is truly such, and I think it can be shown that upon a strictly biological, holistic basis, the movement parallels a phenomenon which generally appears when organisms are undergoing racial senescence. At such times the higher centre appears progressively to lose its control, and the lesser microcosms of the body start forward into abnormal development without reference to the good of the associated systems. The Irish elk offers an illustration. Its enormous horns, developed beyond all reason, must have conduced to its speedy decline and death. A second example is seen in the saber-tooth tiger, unable to close its jaws over its terrible canine teeth. The later trilobites and the modern fishes both assume strange forms and exhibit overdeveloped and disproportionate appendages; the dinosaurs of the closing Mesozoic were horned and hooded monsters. In all these instances a part of the organism starts out on a career of "self-expression", becoming, as it were, a parasite upon the whole in which it should be a co-operative unit.

It needs no particular insight to recognize in certain current and widespread psychological and social ills, a striking parallel to these zoological facts. Our asylums are crowded with pathetic, tormented creatures whose psychic life has broken into fragments, while the constituent elementals, released from central control, proceed to wage war in the field of the inner nature. Long nourished by their creators, these creatures, grown strong, have assaulted the restraining soul, each seeking to carry out the purpose—all too often a sinful one—which was originally laid upon it. These are they of whom Tennyson speaks:

> He seemed like one that all in later time
> Begins to war against ill uses of a life,
> But these from all his life arise and cry:
> Thou hast made us lords and canst not put us down.

Applying the same analysis to a theoretically declining civilization, we might deduce certain facts and expect to witness just what we are witnessing: the loss of the sense of national unity, self-assertion of parts against the whole and against one another, struggles for special privileges, malicious accusations and civil war.

The very thought has been set in poetic form by Macaulay, who contrasts the older integrated, organic Rome with the declining senile State, torn by factional strife:

> Then none were for a party;
> Then all were for the State;
> Then the great man helped the poor,
> And the poor man loved the great:
> Then lands were fairly portioned;
> Then spoils were fairly sold:
> The Romans were like brothers
> In the brave days of old.

Now Roman is to Roman
More hateful than a foe,
And the Tribunes beard the high,
And the Fathers grind the low.
As we wax hot in faction,
In battle we wax cold;
Wherefore men fight not as they fought
In the brave days of old.

In all these instances we are dealing with the destruction of a holistic system which occurs when its lord is departing. The organism has either rejected its own soul, or it is rejected by the soul. In either case the work of its incarnation has to be done all over again. Moreover, we cannot fail to see that its fate is similar to that of the physical body and the psychic nature at death. It is the soul, the function, the purpose, the integrating self, which always holds the system together. When it departs, confusion overtakes the household, and the building falls in ruins.

The small book, *Through the Gates of Gold*, has set forth the law as it applies to civilizations. Through the use of striking metaphors it makes clear how with united efforts men have repeatedly rolled the stone of civilization up the hill of difficulty, only to see it slip back again into the valley. Or again, a matured culture is compared to a full-blown flower with the petals but slackly held together. Either metaphor sets forth the law of disintegration which we have been considering; the soul withdraws, and the centrifugal forces tear the vehicle in pieces. A dark picture, and one that is haunting many a humanitarian as it is haunting Mr. H. G. Wells at this moment.

Most happily, though this is the whole picture for Mr. Wells, it is not the whole picture for *The Gates of Gold*. Mr. Wells is a materialist, and the real author of *The Gates of Gold* is "anything but"! For wherever the doctrine of death and rebirth is taught, there also is taught the doctrine of liberation. Evolution is not a little up-and-down affair of the material world only; in its highest expression it is a mighty cosmic process which sweeps the life-wave around a circle of seven globes which are "in coadunation but not in consubstantiality". It is not enough that organisms should whirl repeatedly through cycles of birth and death upon a single plane. The time must come when a certain mode of manifestation must give way to a new life differing in kind from its predecessor. And though the masses are swept to their death along the declining arc of their cycle, we know that the fittest survive. It is left then for the individual at the apex of the wave of culture to resist the downpull of the curve, and, identifying himself with the imperishable soul, to break the cycle and to set out on the path of the gods toward the spiritual kingdom. Here is no democracy, no whining sentimentalism about the "underprivileged". Here is a warrior doctrine for aristocrats!

But this doctrine is high and difficult for us; we find it a hard saying, though we dimly perceive that it is truly the burden of the message of all wise men, and the very heart of the Christian teaching.

Moreover it has left its witness likewise among the lower organisms. For what is the keynote of evolution but the glorious truth that life has, indeed, perpetually escaped the net of death and outstripped its former records. Decline of life and renewal of life in perpetual cycles on the same level—that is not the story. The song of Easter morning has been ringing for a hundred million years over this old earth!

According to our present biological understanding, the line of plants and animals started with the unicellular races—the protozoans and the protophytes. It was their destiny to pass to the multicellular state; they were to be lifted up to higher holistic systems: to enter upon a mode of life qualitatively different and far richer in content than anything which had gone before, anything offered on the archaic level. They were to subordinate their small lives to a greater life, to throw their lesser wills into vigorous co-operation with a mightier will. But how few accomplished it! The majority were caught by the tendency to inertia and remained unicells. To be sure, they entered upon strange ways and evolved into extravagant and peculiar forms, but they preferred an increase in quantity to a change in quality, and, though they linger through the ages, they are failures of nature, fit only to be devoured by their advanced brethren.

The development of a multicellular *Volvox*-sphere was, on the contrary, a fact of high spiritual import. This little organism, a ball of ciliated cells, all moving under a central control, is a revelation of spiritual law. Paraphrasing certain familiar words, we may say in very truth: Among those born of the *Protozoa* there hath not arisen a greater than *Paramœcium*, yet he who is least among the *Volvocales* is greater than he. The meaning is identical with the original thought which relates to John the Baptist.

In a slightly different way the miracle appeared again when plant and animal life abandoned the water for the air. The water-world and the air-world stand to organisms in their evolution as a pair of superposed planes. The biologist believes that ages of aquatic life preceded the transfer from water to land. Life had attained the level of the seaweeds and the fishes in the respective kingdoms. It had accomplished all that was necessary to be accomplished at that level. Ahead lay senseless repetition or—a breath-taking adventure (literally). Among the primitive ganoid fishes arose certain individuals endowed with the spirit of genius. They were tired of living in the water; already they tasted in their imaginations the sweet fruits which grew on the trees by the shore. They desired and willed ardently, and so striving, they sprouted out lungs from their gullets, dropped their gills, turned their fins into legs, and behold! a race of three-eyed *Stegocephalia* crawling on their bellies in the marshes. But their fish relatives missed the chance; their time of opportunity had come and gone, and they remained in future ages water animals, unborn and without power,—ruled by the ancient mode of life. Some, indeed, sought the dark and cold abysses of the ocean to become little else than terrible devouring mouths—a detail whose analogy it is not necessary to follow.

It is ever left for the individual to make the transition from plane to plane. For what was The Theosophical Society founded? To make mild and lovely

characters "too sweet for earth but not for heaven", as the New England tombstones have it? Well, that sort of an ideal may produce "a fair atmosphere and a happy future" and a *Devachan* full of rosy dreams, but who wants to remain a fish, no matter how many iridescent fins and tails one may develop? We know that our deeper Theosophy scorns such idle dreams. Our true ideal is to pass from the world of Cæsar to the Kingdom of the Heavens, from a three-dimensional, temporal world to a four-space continuum where there shall be time no longer. Use whatever illustration we may, one and all they carry the idea of a complete transformation, a rejection of the old structure devised for life under the old conditions, and the assumption of a new morphology adapted to life in a world which is qualitatively different.

Two paths lie before us: along one of them modern science is urging us. If we accede to that urge we shall do what the timid unicells and the stupid fishes did: remain under the familiar conditions of our material and psychic worlds, seeking to remould them nearer to the heart's desire. Such is (or was) the dream of Mr. Wells, who formulated thereby the unexpressed ideal of almost every modern learned man. In a recent cinema adaptation of one of his popular Utopias, where cities of glass rise to dizzy heights, where horrendous wheels and levers clang and clash and roar, we are allowed to witness the apotheosis of the Wellsian dream—a young man and woman about to be shot into space from a great gun—the first daring attempt at the conquest of other worlds. Or, to take another example from that popular book, *Lost Horizons:* a Christian priest finds a favoured spot in Tibet where men do not die, but where life may be prolonged through the centuries. Realizing all too painfully the impending decline of Western civilization, he makes his monastery a repository for all beautiful and precious things: porcelains, statuary, music—hoping thereby to save at least this much from the universal ruin which is to come. I have heard men say that the book provoked nostalgia. But it is only the Wellsian formula tricked out in finer clothes. It reveals a desperate desire to cling to *things*, and it matters not a whit that the things represent matter in its more æsthetically pleasing forms. Do not mistake me: we all value beautiful things in a world which has become very ugly, not for themselves, but as revelations of the Divine Beauty. For, back of the shadows thrown on the wall of the Cave, are the Divine Originals. So powerful in beauty are they that even their reflections have strength to move us strangely. The porcelains and brocades must all perish in the cycles of the ages, but in our Father's House they are preserved eternally in their noumenal realities.

The scientific dream is but a dazzling *Maya*—just little fish dreaming about bigger fish with swifter fins and larger appetites. We are all familiar with pictures in which a replica of the same scene is repeated again and again to infinite regression. It may be a picture of a room on whose wall hangs a picture of the same room, on whose wall hangs . . . , etc. Science is caught in this kind of scheme. Probing with the microscope it follows the pictured reflections inward; probing with the telescope it follows them outward, and it calls the journey scientific progress. Well, it is progress of a sort—better

than clinging to a single picture for ever. But a child playing with blocks is still playing with blocks, even though it build up a cube measuring ten feet on a side: volume is still volume and cubicity is still cubicity. If we might only prevail upon science to leave its flat picture-world and turn its eyes toward the real room. Its boasted wisdom is sciosophy (shadow knowledge), but it controls the governmental, educational, economic, social, and well-nigh all the religious life of America. Its triumphs mean the progressive failure of evolution to bring to manifestation the truer and deeper life of the soul.

But there is another way—the way those brave fishes took, and a human being is worth more than many fishes. It is the Way of chêlaship, the Way of Liberation. We may well close with the biological parallel which Oliver Wendell Holmes gave us in the fine lines of the "Chambered Nautilus":

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home,
And knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap, forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathèd horn!
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought
I hear a voice that sings—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell
By life's unresting sea!

R.E.T.

There is no virtue, properly speaking, without victory over ourselves; and in general that which costs nothing is worth nothing.—J. DE MAISTRE.

THE EMPEROR AKBAR

SEEKER FOR TRUTH

AKBAR, Emperor of India from 1556 to 1605, brought about the triumph of a fundamental principle of Theosophy,—religious tolerance, in an intolerant age and nation. In this, consciously or unconsciously, he undoubtedly did the work of the Great Lodge. He is particularly interesting to members of The Theosophical Society, whose motto is "There is no religion higher than Truth", because, though one of the greatest rulers that ever lived, his dominant interest was inner, not outer; his passion was the search for truth, which he sought ardently and in all ways throughout his life. He is also interesting in himself, for he was a great man in every respect, just, generous, recklessly courageous, chivalrous, high-minded, doing well whatever he put his hand to, and some things supremely well. Vincent Smith, who cannot be accused of partiality toward Akbar, closes his history of him with the words: "He was a born king of men, with a rightful claim to rank as one of the greatest sovereigns known to history. That claim rests securely on the basis of his extraordinary natural gifts, his original ideas, and his magnificent achievements." Our main interest, however, lies in him as a seeker for truth. Akbar was by nature a mystic, but, like such great Christian mystics as St. Teresa of Avila, St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Catherine of Siena, and many others, he lived a life of intense outer activity, one which changed the face of history.

From his early youth, Akbar dreamed a splendid vision of what he wished to accomplish for India. In place of a land torn by internal strife, divided into many petty, hostile states constantly warring against one another, the weak always in peril of conquest by the strong, the adherents of each religion regarding as enemies to be persecuted those whose creed differed from their own,—he pictured an India at peace, a great confederation of states united under one Emperor as Overlord, but with each race and nation developing its own genius under its own rulers, each man, Mahometan, Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Parsee, free to worship and to seek the truth as his own conscience might dictate. Religious tolerance was not an ideal widely held in either India or Europe in the sixteenth century. There had been bitter religious persecutions in India, as there had been the burning of heretics in Spain, the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day and religious wars in France. Henry IV and the Edict of Nantes ended it for the time being in France, and Akbar ended it for the time being in India, in both cases as the result of hard-won victories on the field of battle.

The death of his father Humayun, in January, 1556, left Akbar, at only thirteen, as nominal sovereign of all Hindustan. Actually, however, he did not even control the capital, Delhi. All he had was a precarious hold on a few districts of the Punjab, a small army of doubtful loyalty, and last but not least, a brilliant general, Bairam Khan. There were three other claimants to the throne, one of

whom promptly occupied both Delhi and Agra. Akbar, though only a boy in years, was already a skilful and experienced warrior, trained through the stormy period of his father's strife and exile to face adversity and superior forces with courage and boldness. On this occasion, the enemy's forces were vastly superior, so much so that Akbar's advisers, with the important exception of Bairam Khan, urged him to give up the fight and retire to Kabul. Bairam Khan was strongly in favour of fighting it out, advice that accorded entirely with Akbar's own courageous nature. Heavily outnumbered though they were, they advanced to meet the opposing forces and gained a decisive victory. In less than two years, Akbar had reconquered his entire realm and was established on the throne.

The next few years were occupied with getting the reins of authority firmly into his own hands. Against the violent opposition of the bigoted Mahometans at his court, he adopted a policy of conciliation toward the Hindus, and admitted them to the high offices of state on a basis of equality. He also remitted the poll tax levied on Hindu, but not on Mahometan pilgrims, a tax which had been bringing in a very large revenue, but which seemed to Akbar grossly unjust. He regarded a tax on devotion as an outrage. His own house put in order, he was in position to attempt to realize his vision for India. That vision is the key to his policy throughout his life. He had no love of conquest in itself, but he could not carry out his plans without it, so he conquered most of India before he died. We do not mean that he shared the modern feeling about wars of aggression. He felt as his age felt, as his great ancestors Genghis Khan and Timurlane had felt, that such wars were quite normal. "A monarch", he said, "should ever be intent on conquest, otherwise his neighbours rise in arms against him. The army should be exercised in warfare, lest from want of training they become self-indulgent."[1] He treated his beaten foes with the utmost generosity. Chivalrous and loyal by nature himself, he recognized those qualities in others and trusted them accordingly. The Rajputs whom he conquered, he restored to their thrones, requiring only that they yield him allegiance. They responded to his trust, gave him their loyalty, and became the stanchest supporters of his rule. Without their aid, he could not have carried out his plans. At his death, his empire extended from the Hindu Kush on the north to the Deccan on the south. Where he ruled, justice, security, peace, and religious tolerance prevailed. In so far, at least, as his dream for India went, he had not been disobedient unto his heavenly vision.

We cannot go into his many reforms, such as the abolition of the practice of enslaving prisoners of war, his strictly enforced orders against molestation of the women and children of conquered foes, his attempts to discourage child marriage, the ending of compulsory *suttee*, and many more. Great as a general, he was, like Napoleon, still greater as an administrator. Again like Napoleon, he combined a mind capable of grasping broad and novel general principles with an extraordinary capacity for laborious attention to detail. His administrative reforms still form the basis of government of a great part of the land he ruled. Elphinstone sums up his reign with the words: "It is to his internal

[1] Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, "Happy Sayings of His Majesty", p. 399.

policy that Akbar owes his place in that highest order of princes whose reigns have been a blessing to mankind."[2]

Any man born with a noble vision who lives to carry it out in action, leaving the world better than he found it, any man whose life has been "a blessing to mankind", is sure to have had during his life the backing, support and guidance of the Lodge. To what extent he may have been aware of being aided, whether he was or was not a conscious agent in the great work that he did, what his Lodge connection may have been, what the degree of his spiritual attainment, his occult rank,[3] are questions on which it is interesting to speculate but dangerous to dogmatize. As we have said, the passion of Akbar's life was not conquest, not power, not even his dream for India; his passion was the search for truth. Only a man whose soul had seen and preserved some memory of its vision, could yearn for truth as Akbar yearned for it. We do not know just what that soul's connection with the Lodge may have been, but we may be reasonably sure that that for which the exile longs is his true home.

What kind of man was he? His boyhood had been spent with his father in exile, in a long series of conflicts, headlong flights with a handful of loyal followers, a victorious foe in hot pursuit, followed by triumphant returns and the recovery of lost territory. It gave the boy a marvellous training in the warrior qualities, and developed his physique to an extraordinary extent. He was quick, active, endowed with great strength, a good shot, a brilliant swordsman, and a remarkable horseman. There are many stories of his physical prowess. He once rode two hundred and sixty miles on horseback in two days. He would often walk thirty or forty miles a day. He swam his horse across the Ganges in full flood. On one occasion, he and a small group of friends were returning on foot from a hunt, when a tigress with five cubs suddenly emerging from the side of the narrow path, blocked their way. The friends shrank back. Akbar sprang forward alone and killed the tigress with a single blow of his sword.

His manners were charming, and his innate dignity such that it was said that "anybody even at a first glance would recognize him as a king". One of his Jesuit visitors wrote of him that "to his own family he was most dear; to the great he was terrible; to the lowly, kind and affable. With small and common people he was so sympathetic and indulgent that he always found time gladly to hear their cases, and to respond graciously to their requests. Their little offerings, too, he used to accept with such a pleased look, handling them and putting them in his bosom, as he did not do with the most lavish gifts of the nobles." The Jesuits at his Court speak of the zeal and watchful conscientiousness which he showed in the administration of justice. What he said of himself,

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[2] Elphinstone, *History of India*, p. 520.

[3] Since writing this article, the author's attention has been called to a statement of Madame Blavatsky's in *The Banner of Light*, Oct. 18th, 1879, reprinted in *A Modern Panarion*, p. 221, in which she speaks of "the great Emperor-Adept, Akbar".

[EDITORS' NOTE: In 1879, theosophical terminology was still very loosely defined. The term, Adept, was used by H.P.B. much as Mackenzie used it in his *Royal Masonic Cyclopædia* (1877), where we read of "adepts in alchemy", "an adept among astrologers", etc. It was not until much later that H.P.B. limited the title to high Initiates. In *The Theosophical Glossary*, published in 1892, she says of Akbar: "The great Mogul Emperor of India, the famous patron of religions, arts, and sciences, the most liberal of all the Mussulman sovereigns. There has never been a more tolerant or enlightened ruler than the Emperor Akbar, either in India or in any other Mahometan country." This is high praise, but it does not imply Adeptship, or Initiation in the Great Lodge.]

"If I were guilty of an unjust act, I would rise in judgment against myself", was not a boast but simple truth. He was by nature humane, gentle and kind, but his anger, though short-lived, could be terrible.

He was as chivalrous as his grandfather, Babur. One instance of this is worth relating. A rebellion broke out in a part of his dominions and the rebels gathered an army of twenty thousand men. Akbar was far away. On hearing of it, he assembled swiftly a force of two thousand horse, and rode the intervening six hundred miles in eleven days. So rapid had been his movements that he took the rebels completely off their guard. "It is a shame", said Akbar, "to attack an unprepared foe". He sounded his trumpets, and waited for his enemies, though they outnumbered him ten to one, to arm and form their line. Then he charged, and after a bitter fight in which the issue was for some time in doubt, he scattered them in wild rout.

Both his grandfather, whose memoirs are famous, and his father, were scholars. Akbar himself as a boy had had the best of tutors before and after he came to the throne, but, for some reason, he stedfastly refused to learn either to read or to write. Extraordinary as it may seem, this did not in the least interfere with his becoming a man of unusually wide culture and learning. Apparently he preferred to learn by his ear rather than his eye. He was very fond of listening to reading aloud, and at his death had a library of some twenty-four thousand manuscripts, most of which were beautifully illuminated and bound, and which were valued at over six million rupees. He had a remarkable memory which retained what was read to him. He studied the great Sanskrit writings, and had many of them, including the *Bhagavad Gîta*, translated into the vernacular. He was a patron of science and of the arts,—painting, architecture, poetry, music, literature, all of which flourished during his reign.

Akbar was by nature a mystic who, like the Sufis, with whose poetry he had saturated himself from his early youth, sought earnestly all his life to attain to the ineffable bliss of union with the Divine. There is good reason to believe that at times and in some measure, he succeeded. The first such experience, of which we have any record, occurred when he was fourteen, about a year after he came to the throne. He was afflicted with a sudden disgust for the life around him, and found the presence of "short-sighted men", men whose thoughts were all of this world, intolerable. Sending for his horse Hairan, a high-spirited but particularly vicious steed which only one with his extraordinary ability with animals could have ridden, he galloped away unescorted into the desert to be alone. He rode for many miles, how far he did not know, and then dismounted "to commune with God". The horse galloped away and disappeared. Akbar fell into an ecstasy. After a time, his "heart eased and refreshed", he came to himself, alone, on foot, and far out in the desert. For a while he hesitated, uncertain what to do. Then he saw a riderless horse in the distance, galloping toward him. It proved to be Hairan, who came up and stood beside him, waiting for him to mount. The incident made a deep impression on Akbar, who regarded it as a Divine intimation that he take up his work in the world.

All his life he sought earnestly to learn the Divine will, and often spoke of the

great difficulty of doing so. Some of his methods were strikingly original. Shortly after the incident just mentioned, he engaged in a series of the most recklessly daring adventures. One will serve as a sample. One day he met a particularly savage elephant that had just killed its mahout, mangled other men, and become a general source of terror. Akbar walked up to him smiling, put his foot on the elephant's tusk and mounted to his back. Then he set him to fight another quarrelsome elephant. At the height of the fight, Akbar saw that the driver of the other elephant had lost control. The young Emperor immediately leapt from his own elephant to the back of the other. Later in life, Akbar stated that his reason for risking his life in these dare-devil escapades was that he wished to learn the will of God for him, to test whether or not he had in truth been entrusted with a divine mission. If God were displeased with him, he would make it easy for his life to be taken away. If he were preserved, it would be a sign that there was work in the world that he was intended to do. Akbar probably had never heard of the second of the temptations in the wilderness, and this seemed to him a simple way of learning God's will.

Another experience, of which we have only meagre and confused accounts, occurred some years later. Akbar had ordered a huge hunt, after the Mogul fashion. For ten days, many thousands of beaters had been driving the game in a huge semi-circle preparatory to slaughter on a great scale. Then, while resting under a tree, a vision came to Akbar. "A sublime joy took possession of his bodily frame. The attraction of cognition of God cast its ray." "The primacy of the spiritual world took possession of his holy form. . . . What the chiefs of purity and deliverance [Sufi seers] had searched for in vain, was revealed to him." He had a vivid sense of union with God. One of its immediate effects was to fill him with a strong revulsion against the world, the pomp and splendour of his throne, and all his outer activities, so that for the moment he seems even to have thought of abdicating and becoming a hermit. That misunderstanding passed at once, and he attacked his duties with renewed activity. But in his vision he had seen all life as one, in the Creator's eyes. The slaughter of unoffending animals appeared as a crime, and he instantly gave orders that the hunt was to be abandoned and "not a feather on a finch hurt". Every animal was to escape "according to its habits". He had been very fond of hunting, but from that time on he gave it up. Even when his enjoyment of it had been at its keenest, he had often in the past broken off in the midst of a hunt, if he chanced to see a hermit or "holy man", in order to talk with him in the hope of gaining a new insight into truth. He also gave up meat-eating for at least six months of every year. He did not wish, he said, to "make his body a tomb for animals".

Vigorous and highly successful man of action though he was, he spent many entire nights in religious discussion, and many whole mornings in solitary prayer and meditation on a stone bench in a little bare room. "He was", wrote his son Jehangir, "always with God". He never missed an opportunity to gain light from anyone he thought might have something to contribute to his knowledge of truth. Early in his reign, he instituted religious discussions every Thursday night. His methods bore a close resemblance to those of a Theosophical So-

ciety Branch meeting. Holders of the most divergent views were invited to speak, and a general discussion followed. At first the debates were between the different sects of the Moslems, but later on the representatives of other religions were invited to explain and defend their beliefs. Akbar himself usually presided and did his best to enforce courtesy and the theosophical ideal of according that tolerance to the opinions of others that one desires for one's own. The various Moslem sects disgusted and at times angered him by their intolerance and violent abuse of all who disagreed with their own narrow views.

When he heard of Christianity, he wrote to the Jesuit Mission, at the Portuguese settlement of Goa, asking them to send back with the ambassador who bore his letter "two of your learned men, who should bring with them the books of the law, and above all the Gospels, because I truly and earnestly desire to understand their perfection; and with great urgency I again demand that they should come with my ambassador aforesaid, and bring their books. From their coming I shall obtain the utmost consolation; they will be dear to me, and I shall receive them with every possible honour. As soon as I shall have become well instructed in the law, and shall have comprehended its perfection, they will be able, if willing, to return at their pleasure, and I shall send them back with great honours, and appropriate rewards."[4]

After a good deal of discussion, three Jesuit fathers were selected in response to this invitation, Ridolfo Aquaviva, a younger son of the Duke of Atri, one of the most influential nobles of the Kingdom of Naples, Antonio Monserrate, a Spaniard who had shown extraordinary courage and devotion during an outbreak of the plague in Lisbon, and Francesco Enriquez, a converted Mahometan. Immediately on their arrival, Akbar, dressed in Portuguese costume as a courtesy to them, had them brought into his presence, and, so great was his eagerness to learn of Christianity, kept them talking until two o'clock in the morning. Then, seeing their weariness, he dismissed them, but renewed the audience the next day, at which time he accepted from them the gift of a magnificently bound copy of the Bible. He received the Bible with the utmost reverence, a reverence which he invariably showed toward the objects of devotion of any religion, an instinctive courtesy which some of his biographers have misunderstood, and which has led them to accuse him of hypocrisy. He in his turn, offered the fathers a large sum of money, which they refused, accepting only enough for bare subsistence. They were given permission to seek converts, to preach publicly, and were invited to the weekly discussions in the House of Worship. Unfortunately, as has happened with other missionaries, their zeal and courage were more to be commended than their tact or their tolerance, and Akbar had to intervene to save them from bodily harm.

He was much disappointed to find the Christians as fiercely intolerant as the Mahometans. Nevertheless, he invited the Jesuits to live in the palace, and would often spend half the night in discussing Christianity with them. He found so much with which he could agree that for a time they had high hopes of converting him. These were increased by his putting the education of his second

[4] Vincent Smith, *Akbar*, p. 169. Quoted as translated from the Italian of Bartoli.

son, Murad, in their charge, and by his personal affection for them. He often "conversed with them without ceremony, and would pace up and down with his arm around Aquaviva's shoulder". The doctrines of the Virgin Birth and of the Trinity were stumbling blocks. Akbar was undoubtedly attracted to Christianity, but he was no less attracted to other religions. A month after the arrival of the Jesuits, Akbar began the Zoroastrian custom of prostrating himself publicly before the rising sun. Binyon says that it would seem that Akbar, "in his restless seeking for a faith that should satisfy his inner nature, never contented himself with abstract inquiries, but, as if determined to put on the whole habit of a creed, adopted with each its outward ceremony and ritual, and used its symbols, all apparently with a like sincerity of approach".

The Jesuits took Akbar roundly to task for certain practices which he permitted in his kingdom, gladiatorial shows and the custom of *suttee* among them. Far from resenting this, Akbar refused thereafter to attend a *suttee*, and later definitely prohibited the practice, to the great anger of the Brahmins and some of his other Hindu subjects. His determination to break up the custom came within an ace of costing him his life. A cousin of the Rajah of Amber died, and his young widow, a daughter of the Rajah of Malwar, refused to become *suttee*. Her step-son, backed by the Brahmin family priest, decided to force her to do so, in violation of the imperial edict. At the last moment the Emperor, probably through one of the young Rajputnis in his harem, heard what was happening. Instantly mounting the swiftest horse in his stable, without waiting for his escort, he galloped alone at top speed to the scene of the *suttee*. The young widow had already taken her place on the funeral pyre, and the flames had almost reached the long bridal garment she was wearing, when Akbar dashed up at a furious pace, charged through the circle of chanting priests and armed Rajputs, and himself lifted the princess from the pyre. The infuriated Rajputs drew their swords, and for a moment the Emperor's life was in grave danger. Then two of his devoted Rajput officers came up and the crisis passed. The princess was safely placed under the protection of her own family.[5]

The Jesuit mission had arrived in February, 1580. Some months before, Akbar had taken a step of great importance. Under the Moslem law, great power was vested in the Ulema, the assemblage of "doctors learned in the law". The administration of justice was in their hands, and while their power remained unbroken it was useless for Akbar to attempt to carry out his policy of universal religious toleration, which appeared to their bigoted minds as sacrilege and a direct violation of the teachings of the Prophet. They further had the right under the Moslem law to issue a *fetva*, or religious decree, declaring the Emperor's policy of tolerance to be contrary to the Koran, a decree which would have had the result of absolving all Moslems from the duty of obedience to the Emperor. It was the old story of a clash between a powerful priestcraft and a strong ruler. Compromise never appealed to Akbar. He forced the issue by having his friend, the Shaikh Mubarak, a Sufi mystic, and father of his two closest friends and advisors, Feizi and Abul Fazl, prepare and circulate a document proclaiming

[5] Abul Fazl, *Akbarnama*, iii, p. 395.

Akbar a Sultan-i-Adil, or Just Ruler, which the Ulema dared not refuse to sign. The decrees of a Sultan-i-Adil, under the law of Islam, took precedence over any Ulema, and reduced the latter to impotence. The effect of the proclamation was to make Akbar virtual Pope as well as King, and to set him free to carry out the dream that had dominated his policy from the first,—the establishment throughout India of religious equality for all faiths.

One of his first steps was to throw open the discussions in the House of Worship to all faiths. Akbar was convinced, as are students of Theosophy to-day, that there is truth at the heart of all of the nobler religions, and he set himself to find it. Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, Parsees, and the Jesuits when they arrived, were all invited to the discussions, and, in addition, Akbar spent many hours in personal conversation with the most eminent representatives of the different faiths. A learned Brahmin, who presumably feared pollution if he entered the abode of an unbeliever, but who was unwilling to refuse a sincere inquirer, was drawn up in a basket by a rope outside the palace walls until he was opposite Akbar's window, and "spent many nights instructing the Emperor in the esoteric doctrines of the Upanishads". Curiously enough, there is no record of his having been in touch at any time with Buddhism. He was deeply impressed by the symbolism of the Zoroastrians, and established the sacred fire in his palace, where his friend Abul Fazl was charged with the duty of seeing that it never went out. The sun, as the symbol of the Divine, made a particular appeal to him. In the evening when the lamps were lighted, the whole court was required to rise in reverence at the coming of the light, "in commemoration of the sunrise", Akbar said. Those who would criticize him for this, might well be asked to find a better symbol for the Divine. One of his historians describes him as "a Sufi mystic at heart and a Zoroastrian by practice". He also adopted certain Brahminical customs and wore the sacred thread at times. For a week at the new year, he wore a robe of a different colour each day, the colour corresponding to that of the sacred planet for that day of the week. The Jain influence resulted in edicts governing and restricting the slaughter of animals. Akbar himself in the last years of his life abstained almost wholly from meat.

Akbar always attended the discussions in the House of Worship, which sometimes ran to appalling length, beginning on Thursday evenings and occasionally continuing until noon on Friday. It is not altogether surprising that tempers were frequently rasped. The meetings were held regularly for a number of years. Then, perhaps because they had served their turn, or perhaps in discouragement at the intolerance and closed minds of those who debated there, Akbar discontinued them.

The debates had been held in a special building in the new capital which Akbar had built, Fathpur Sikri, "City of Victory". All trace of that building has disappeared, and there is reason to believe that it was pulled down by order of Akbar himself. Fathpur Sikri, in Akbar's mind, seems to have been a symbol of his great dream of unity, even its architecture being a beautiful and harmonious mingling of the Hindu and the Moslem. It was over the entrance to the great Mosque there that the Emperor, after an inscription recounting his

victories, had inscribed in conclusion the famous words: "Said Jesus, on whom be peace: 'The world is a bridge. Pass over it. Do not build on it' ". This was added only a few years before his death, after he had already abandoned the city, which still stands empty and deserted.

In 1581, Akbar promulgated the Din-i-Ilahi, "Divine Faith", which some historians call a new religion, but which was actually a new religious and philosophical Order. The name, "Divine Faith", seems very like "Divine Wisdom". It would be interesting to know exactly what the difference in meaning is between "Din", translated as "Faith", and the Greek word "Sophia", Wisdom.[6] A part at least of Akbar's motive in promulgating it, was to supply a bond of union for the different races of his Empire. "The Emperor did not promulgate the new faith in the spirit of a missionary, zealous for obtaining new recruits. His object was not proselytization, but a new synthesis of the warring creeds. He approached the whole question in what we might call a theosophical spirit, and inculcated no rigid formulae."[7] The Din-i-Ilahi upheld no dogmas and recognized no prophets. The only authority it did recognize was that of each man's own soul. Elphinstone says:

> It seems to have been pure deism; in addition to which some ceremonies were permitted in consideration of human infirmity. It maintained that we ought to reverence God according to the knowledge of him derived from our own reason, by which his unity and benevolence are sufficiently established; that we ought to serve him and seek for our future happiness by subduing our bad passions, and practising such virtues as are beneficial to mankind; but that we should not adopt a creed or practise a ritual on the authority of *any man*, as all were liable to error like ourselves. If it were absolutely necessary for men to have some visible object of adoration, by means of which they might raise their soul to the Divinity, Akbar recommended that the sun, the planets, or fire should be the symbols. He had no priests, no public worship.[8]

The Din-i-Ilahi was "for the few". It is probable that at no time were there more than a few thousand members at the most. The names of only eighteen have been preserved, including but one Hindu, Rajah Birbal. Refusal to join made no difference in Akbar's confidence and friendship. It was a matter for each man's conscience. The Din-i-Ilahi, as we have said, had no creed. Its spirit is expressed in the following verses written by Abul Fazl, and inscribed by the Emperor's order over the gate of a building dedicated to it:

O God, in every temple I see people that seek Thee,
And in every language I hear spoken, people praise Thee!
Polytheism and Islam feel after Thee,
Each religion says, "Thou art one without equal".
If it be a mosque, people murmur holy prayer,
And if it be a Christian Church, people ring the bell from love to Thee,
Sometimes I frequent the Christian cloister and sometimes the mosque,
But it is Thou whom I search from temple to temple.

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[6] *Din*, although developed from different roots, means *religion, faith*, in both Persian and Arabic. In Arabic its basal meaning is "submission to Divine judgment". In Persian it developed from "faith by (inward?) sight". The Persian meanings are given as "religion, wisdom, inner being, spiritual ego, individuality". *Ilahi* is Arabic. Akbar was, of course, at home in both languages.

[7] Prasad, *A Short History of Moslim Rule in India*, p. 371.

[8] *History of India*, p. 524.

Thy elect have no dealings with either heresy or orthodoxy; for neither of them stands behind the screen of Thy truth.
Heresy to the heretic, and religion to the orthodox,
But the dust of the rose petal belongs to the heart of the perfume-seller.

"Four degrees of sacrifice" are mentioned. They consisted of the readiness to sacrifice property, life, reputation, and religion.

While the Din-i-Ilahi had no dogmas, many regulations have been ascribed to it, which have been a source of much misunderstanding both of Akbar and of the "Divine Faith". This is in large measure due to the scantiness of our knowledge. Apart from a few letters from Jesuits, there are only two main sources of information. First and by far the most important are the writings of Akbar's friend, confidant, and panegyrist, Abul Fazl. Writing unfortunately in a style of fulsome praise, distasteful to Western ears, Abul Fazl gives a valuable but brief account of the Emperor's faith, and says that he is going to write a separate volume dealing with that and with Akbar's methods; but Abul Fazl was murdered before it saw the light. The other source is Badaoni, a bigoted, narrow-minded, orthodox Mahometan, who believed Akbar to be engaged in undermining the true faith, and who was bitterly jealous of the influence of the Hindus with the Emperor, and of the fact that all the offices at court had been thrown open to them. His work contains scores of pages of the most violent denunciation. It is full of hearsay and of statements that carry their own refutation on their face. Nevertheless, in the absence of other sources of information, many of his assertions have been accepted as facts by some historians, and have affected unfavourably their view of Akbar.

The official account of the Din-i-Ilahi is given very briefly by Abul Fazl in Ain 77 of the *Ain-i-Akbari*. He says that a people seeking guidance to truth will naturally look to their king, for a king possesses, independent of men, "a ray of divine wisdom". The king is the spiritual guide of the nation, "and sees in the performance of this duty a means of pleasing God. He has now opened the gate that leads to the right path, and satisfies the thirst of all that wander about panting for truth. But whether he checks men in their desire to become disciples, or admits them at other times, he guides them in each case to the realms of bliss. Many sincere inquirers, from the mere light of his wisdom, or his holy breath, obtain a degree of awakening which other spiritual doctors could not produce by repeated fasting and prayers for forty days."

The ceremony of initiation was performed by Akbar in this manner:

When a novice bears on his forehead the sign of earnestness of purpose, and he be daily inquiring more and more, His Majesty accepts him, and admits him on a Sunday, when the world-illuminating sun is in its highest splendour. Notwithstanding every strictness and reluctance shown by His Majesty in admitting novices, there are many thousands, men of all classes, who have cast over their shoulders the mantle of belief, and look upon their conversion to the New Faith as the means of obtaining every blessing.

At the above-mentioned time of everlasting auspiciousness, the novice with his turban in his hands, puts his head on the feet of His Majesty. This is symbolical, and expresses that the novice, guided by good fortune and the assistance of his good star, has cast from his head conceit and selfishness, the root of so many evils, offers his heart in worship, and

now comes to inquire as to the means of obtaining everlasting life. His Majesty, the chosen one of God, then stretches out the hand of favour, raises up the suppliant, and replaces the turban on his head, meaning by these symbolical actions that he has raised up a man of pure intentions, who from seeming existence has now entered into real life. His Majesty then gives the novice the *Shast*,[9] upon which is engraved "the Great Name", and His Majesty's symbolical motto, *Allahu Akbar*. This teaches the novice the truth that "*the pure Shast* and the pure sight never err".

The inquiry as to "the means of obtaining everlasting life"—the inquiry of the young man in the Gospels—is interesting as showing the perception of a truth the world has lost—that everlasting life must be won by a man's own effort.

Abul Fazl gives a description of certain ordinances to be observed by members of the Order. They are entirely outer and trivial. Members are to greet each other with *Allahu Akbar*, God is great, and the response, *Jalla Jalaluhu*, May His glory shine forth. They are to give feasts at certain times, to abstain as far as possible from meat, never to eat anything which they themselves have slain, not to use the same vessels as butchers, etc., etc. There are very few of these rules. A later passage gives a special rule governing the funerals of "darsaniyyah disciples"[10] which concludes: "But this order is based on a fundamental rule which His Majesty indicated, but which I cannot here mention." [11]

Badaoni, who had apparently quarreled with Akbar, and had become the leader of the orthodox Mahometan party which bitterly opposed the Emperor, pictures him as persecuting the Mahometans, insulting their faith, promulgating innumerable oppressive and silly regulations, and setting himself up as divine. Many of his statements are obviously malicious and rather stupid slander, and most of the pretended regulations which he gives are puerile. He states, for example, that the Emperor ordered dogs and swine to be kept in the harem "and regarded the going to look at them every morning as a religious service".[12] Whatever else Akbar was, he was not childish. His worst detractors grant him an extraordinarily keen intellect and a sound judgment. Yet in spite of its obvious unreliability, Badaoni's picture has led Vincent Smith and some other historians to the conclusion that "the whole scheme [of the Din-i-Ilahi] was the outcome of ridiculous vanity", "a monument to Akbar's folly", and have accused him of persecuting the Mahometans.

Madame Blavatsky evidently did not share that view or she would not have described Akbar in the *Theosophical Glossary* as the most tolerant and enlightened ruler that India or any other Mahometan country has ever had. The only evidence in support of Badaoni's tirade is contained in a few of the letters from the Jesuits. Prasad says that they got their information from the same bitterly prejudiced source, the "orthodox" party which had declared war on the Emperor. It is easy to understand how the bigoted adherents of the religion that had been dominant to the extent of persecuting all others, should regard tolerance and equality as an infringement of their rights and an insult to their faith. For Akbar to persecute the adherents of any religion, let alone the one

[9] "*Shast* means *aim*; secondly, *anything round*, either a ring or a thread." Blochmann.
[10] From *darsan, to have seen.*
[11] Blochmann, *Ain-i-Akbari*, i, p. 207.
[12] Badaoni, p. 314.

in which he was born, would have been to go against his entire character, his firmly held opinions and his life-long work. His own words, just after he had abolished the tax on Hindu pilgrims, show the principle to which he steadfastly adhered in all his actions. "Although", he said, "the tax fell on a vain superstition, yet as all modes of worship are designed for one great Being, it is wrong to throw an obstacle in the way of the devout, and to cut them off from their mode of intercourse with their Maker."[13] Members of The Theosophical Society, which endured for years the most violent abuse based on complete misapprehensions of its character and purposes, ought to have no difficulty in understanding the bitter contemporary attacks on the Din-i-Ilahi. They might ask themselves what posterity would think of The Theosophical Society, if its sole source of information were an account written by the member of their family most vehemently opposed to their interest in Theosophy.

Badaoni's slanders we can dismiss. The triviality of the regulations published by Abul Fazl is, at first glance, harder to understand. There is, however, a simple possible explanation. We have already referred to the special order about funerals which closes with the statement that it is based on "a fundamental rule which His Majesty indicated but which I cannot here mention". This is a plain statement that a part at least of the Din-i-Ilahi was secret, an obvious possibility which seems to have been entirely overlooked by historians. We know that there was a ritual of initiation, and that Akbar accepted some candidates and refused others. It is hard to see why anyone should have been refused admission to an Order with only the beliefs and requirements that have been made public. On the other hand, in all ages and religions there have been those who, having really attained to some knowledge of truth, have realized that it could not safely be given to the multitude. This is not a popular doctrine to-day, but the truth rarely is popular. Charles Johnston, in one of his articles, implies that the failure of Greece was due in part to the fact that Plato violated an age-old rule, in giving to the unprepared masses, truths that should only have been imparted to those pledged to secrecy and to a strict moral discipline. That Akbar attained to a number of theosophical truths we know. He may well have grasped that one, and hence have taken care to see that others were not unwisely revealed.

The Din-i-Ilahi kept its secrets inviolate, as no doubt Akbar kept his. We do, however, know some of his beliefs. He believed in one Supreme Spirit, in the unity of the Universe, and hence that all things that are, partake to some degree of the Divine nature. He believed in reincarnation and that the soul comes from the Supreme, and, after many ages, attaining to complete purification, gains re-union with the Divine. He was a mystic, and was convinced, of his own knowledge and experience, that it is possible for the soul here and now, in incarnation, to attain to communion and some measure of union with God. We have already spoken of two of these experiences. He himself refers briefly to others. There is also a Hindu tradition that in 1573, he beheld a "marvellous vision" at the Brindaban temples, the reputed home of Krishna.

[13] *Akbarnama*, ii, p. 239.

Some of Akbar's own statements, quoted by Abul Fazl in "Happy Sayings of His Majesty", are illuminating:

"The smallest details are mirrors capable of reflecting a comprehensive outline."

"True greatness, in spiritual and worldly matters, does not shrink from the minutiæ of business but regards their performance as an act of Divine worship."

"There is no need to discuss the point that a vacuum in nature is impossible. God is omnipresent."

"There exists a bond between the Creator and the creature which is not expressible in language."

"That which is without form cannot be seen whether in sleeping or waking, but it is apprehensible by force of imagination. To behold God in vision is, in fact, to be understood in this sense."

"Each person according to his condition gives the Supreme Being a name, but in reality to name the Unknowable is vain."

"Who can sever the attachment of the rational soul to the Supreme Being?"

"Although I am the Master of so vast a kingdom, and all the appliances of government are at my hand, yet since true greatness consists in doing the will of God, my mind is not at ease in this diversity of sects and creeds; and apart from this outward pomp of circumstances, with what satisfaction, in my despondency, can I undertake the sway of empire? I await the coming of some discreet man of principle who will resolve the difficulties of my conscience."

Even in those distant days, Akbar was evidently longing for the coming of a "God-instructed man".

One statement of Badaoni's which, being his, may or may not be true, is interesting. He says that Akbar "gave habitation to the Yogis, visiting the *math* almost unattended, and holding scientific and religious conversations with them. They initiated him into all their knowledge and practices, so that he sometimes showed gold which he pretended was of his own making."[14]

"Seek and ye shall find" has been true in all ages. Akbar sought ardently and, as we have tried to show, unquestionably attained to knowledge of certain theosophic truths. The heart of the theosophic doctrine is that chêlaship, the passionate, complete devotion to one's Master, whoever that Master may be, is a present possibility and fact. Akbar spoke much of discipleship. He called a group in the Din-i-Ilahi "chêlas". We do not know what he meant by it, or whether he himself found his own Master and gained the intimate, personal relationship that is involved in chêlaship. That he served the Lodge seems clear, but we have no way of telling whether or not he did so consciously. Unfortunately, we know nothing of his inner life during his last ten years. His friend, historian, and co-worker in the Din-i-Ilahi, Abul Fazl, was murdered by Akbar's own son in 1602. Akbar himself died in 1605. The "Divine Faith" and whatever of truth it may have held, passed with him to the other world.

J. F. B. Mitchell.

[14] Wilson's translation, *Collected Works*, ii, p. 384. Compare also Lowe's translation, *Badaoni*, ii, p. 334.

WITHOUT CENSOR

XI.

THE parallel between the military life, the military order, and the spiritual hierarchy, or the life and order of the spiritual world, raised above the mere consideration of the similarity of the qualities necessary to excel in each, and expanded to include the strategy and tactics of the inner spiritual warfare—the conscious and deliberate use and ordering of those qualities of heart and mind and will, in which the individual has to some degree attained, to further the progress of his inner campaign and advance—all this, from that midnight in the quiet room at First Army Headquarters when I sensed something of the ordered direction of large units in actual war, became for me more and more a subject of frequent thought, and has been so in the years that have intervened. Yet, always, consideration of the strategy and tactics of the inner life, the right handling for constructive purposes of attributes of character already formed, or partially formed, brings one back again to those fundamentals of character which are the basis, the foundation setting for the individual soldier. It is not possible to consider either aspect of the inner warfare separately; they are always inter-related, interwoven. What a man *is*, what he has made himself with the help of his superiors in that inner world, what he continues to be, determines the extent to which he is able consciously to make use of this inner strategy and tactics, in order to further his spiritual advance. Whatever military parallels one uses in order to emphasize similarity, points of likeness between the inner warfare and the outer, the need of definite and permanent attainment in certain inner ways, of having tried troops to use, is paramount and essential. My thinking along these lines received a powerful stimulus at about that time from a letter which I received from my friend in the Movement in New York, in which he said: "We have been reading aloud *The Principles of War*, by General Foch. . . . Just because Foch really deals with principles and has thought deeply, his book might easily be paraphrased as a treatise on 'the spiritual combat'. Expressed in terms of force instead of in terms of consciousness, it appeals more directly to the modern mind than such books as that by Scupoli. It is really a profound book. But you, poor man, have no chance for luxuries such as that,—though, in compensation, you witness what Foch wrote about, and can at all times translate and re-translate from one set of terms to the other,—the battle of the soul to that of the Allies, and vice versa." There was no opportunity, then, for reading that book; indeed, my chances at that time for any reading at all were few and far between. But what that letter meant, beyond peradventure, was that I was on the right track in the line of thinking which had opened out for me, and that I must pursue it, brood over it, until I had so made the principles involved a definite

part of my being, that they would manifest themselves in outer life and living, and so, perhaps, would come to mean something to others.

Much has been said in regard to the initial necessity for implicit and instant obedience; emphasis has been laid upon the fact that it is the fundamental basis of all things, whether in the case of the man who enlists as a soldier, or in that of the aspirant for chêlaship at the beginning of the Way. I had received very early an object lesson in this respect at the Officers Training Camp at Plattsburgh, when, as related in an earlier article, vociferous hand-clapping at a mass-meeting of the candidates for commissions had been rudely interrupted by the Regular Army, with the explanation that in the Army it was not customary to evince either approbation or disapprobation, and with the command that thereafter it would not be done. Why not? That is easy to see. If you are to have among soldiers the quality of obedience, that basis of the military life, immediate, unquestioning, you cannot have men expressing themselves as to whether or not they like the thing which they have been commanded to do. Nor, when a man has started on the road to chêlaship, can there be obedience on his part to the laws of the spiritual world, expressed for him through the suggestions or orders of those who are his superiors in that world, if he allows his lower nature continually to approve or to disapprove of the advice which he has received; if he permits it to chatter to him that this is good, that the other cannot be right and that there must be a mistake somewhere. But for the aspirant, as well as for the soldier, there is an additional and highly important reason for absolute and unquestioning obedience, for it is only through such obedience that there will come to either that quality of *understanding* obedience which sees, in part at any rate, the reason and the purpose which lie behind an order; which glimpses something, at least, of its necessity and meaning; which brings increased vision, greater trustworthiness and the possibility of an enlarged sphere of effort.

Both receive their orders in much the same way. To the aspirant they come, based on spiritual and universal law, down through the hierarchy, through those in advance of him in all ways of inner progress, until, through his immediate superior he is told those things which have a bearing on his inner problems of the moment, and is thus helped to meet the situation as it exists on his front. For the soldier in the battle line, orders originate with the Army High Command, which knows the larger plan of the whole. Down through army corps, through division, through brigade they come, constantly adapted at each stage to cover the narrowing exigencies of the local situation, until finally they reach his regiment. Again, the orders are contracted in scope and are modified to conform to the conditions which obtain in that regimental sector. They go from regimental headquarters to the battalion, then to the company commander, who, finally, makes the appropriate dispositions of his platoons to conform to the order which he receives, and which by this time contains little, if any, suggestion of the larger purpose and mission at stake, which had concerned the Army High Command. By the time that the individual soldier in the line has received his instructions from his platoon commander, they

have to do only with the immediate circumstances and surroundings in which he finds himself, with how he is to handle himself, in conjunction with those close to him, during the next few hours or days. That, at the moment, is all that he needs to know, as it is all, in similar circumstances, that the aspirant for chêlaship at a like moment requires. It would be impossible for either of them to comprehend at the moment the larger issues involved, to understand anything of the greater plan and purpose in which they are playing their part. If a somewhat wider range of vision, partial and incomplete as it would be, were possible for either of them at the point at which they find themselves, it would only tend to blur and to obscure their understanding of the scope of their immediate duties, and to take the edge off the quality of their present effort. To do what is right, to the uttermost of their ability, in the surroundings in which they are placed, asking for such help from above as they may need, is the present clearly defined duty of both; a united effort of heart and mind and will. But, when the immediate duty is over, when their obedience of the moment is complete, then it is possible for them to make effective use in retrospect of their powers of observation, to try to trace cause and effect, to see reasons, to understand purposes, to learn from experience, so that there may be, in their next test of obedience, an admixture of intelligent co-operation and understanding. In this way the quality of their obedience improves, and their ability to serve increases, until the point is reached at which they are able to impart to others not only some knowledge of how to obey, but also something of the purpose and the meaning behind and beyond obedience itself; and then their promotion comes. If, however, either the aspirant or the soldier fails to obey at his particular point of the battle line, he jeopardizes far more than his own personal situation. If he fails to obey through stupidity, it is bad enough, but not hopeless; but if it is through a feeling of disapprobation, if it is because he does not like that which he has been told to do, his personal situation is desperate indeed. In each case he has endangered, through a possible miscarriage at the point at which he is responsible, the success of the entire plan of the High Command.

The infrequency with which praise is awarded in the Army was so striking, that it seemed inevitable that, back of this disinclination to commend, there must lie some principle to which a parallel could be found in the life and order of the spiritual world. It is true that decorations were awarded for valour and for distinguished service, that meritorious performance was commended in citations and in orders. It seemed to me, however, that always in such cases it was the purpose, not to reward the individual in question, but to reward the act itself, which of necessity must be far beyond the ordinary line of duty. Attention was directed to exceptional performance in order to stimulate others to similar acts, and so to raise the general level of the morale of the Army as a whole. It was almost as if the harm which might be done to the individual in question was deliberately risked, for the greater good of the larger number. That harm might be done by praise and approbation was clearly recognized, for ordinary, and even extraordinary performance of duty passed

usually without comment. It was a commonplace that the best thing that could happen was to hear nothing at all from one's superiors; that meant inevitably that one was doing one's job all right; if one was not, one was perfectly certain to hear about it. The reason, the underlying principle, in this matter of withholding commendation, is not hard to find, and it is valid in the inner life as well. Most men simply cannot stand praise, just as the great majority cannot stand up under prosperity, and for the same reasons. Praise unloosens vanity, and, after a little, after the recipient has had time to think about the commendation which he has received and to become thoroughly complacent, up surge self-reference and self-will and self-love, and before very long the fact that a man is working for a Cause—whether military or spiritual—is lost sight of, and lower nature is in complete command of the situation. A decoration for valour might well change the whole nature of the man who has received it; that for which he has been rewarded, formerly no more than the thing at hand to do, has become for him instead a great deed, something magnified out of all due proportion, and he himself has become in his own eyes a figure of supreme importance. For the aspirant for chêlaship, the faintest stirring of a desire for commendation might well be the warning signal that vanity was at work, and that careful self-examination was an immediate necessity, in order to arrive at a thorough understanding of the reactions of his lower nature, and to prevent any outward expression in word or deed of those latent concomitants of vanity, self-will and self-love. The Army, and that life which has as its motive spiritual growth and attainment, are run on the same principle,—with this difference, that one who is really dedicated to the inner life does not want praise. The Cause comes first. If praise be awarded, it should serve merely as sign and signal that the particular effort which called it forth has been, for once in a way, rightly made; that the results are, for a wonder, satisfactory; that, perhaps, the lesson which that particular incident was designed to teach has been sufficiently well learned to make it possible to move forward and to learn the next. Praise, a signal to advance, not to rest content. For only as we advance, only as we attack, can the plan of the High Command go through.

It has been pointed out that the strategy and tactics of the Allied Armies in the closing days of the war, in operations against an enemy who was at last on the defensive, called for the driving of salients into the enemy line, which would have the effect of exposing his flanks, and thus of rendering him so vulnerable that he would be forced to retire at those points, and thus constantly to give ground. Frontal attacks at strong points of resistance, in the effort to demolish them first, were not contemplated. Indeed, throughout all the American operations of the summer, the principle had been constantly reiterated of always attacking strong points by envelopment, and never directly; of "squeezing-out" a position by passing it on both flanks, and thus forcing its defenders to retire in order to save themselves, after which the position was mopped up from the rear by the attacking forces and the gain consolidated. The reasons for this were, of course, that the waste of time, of life and of effort in a frontal attack was out of all proportion to the success gained, which could usually

be better secured by the other method. There is a close parallel here with a familiar inner problem. How often we persist in the frontal attack, resolved to overcome some particular fault, in order that we may go forward all along the line, until, through our sheer obstinacy and opinionatedness as to the necessity of gaining this objective *first*, before further progress is possible, our entire inner advance is held up. Our inner enemy may be on the defensive, and we may be full of the spirit of the attack, but we are not using our intelligence when this happens, we are not utilizing the more aggressive qualities within us, nor handling them as the commander of an army corps marshals his divisions in an offensive, using one to reinforce the position of another.

The commander of an army corps sees, perhaps, in the centre of his corps front, a strong enemy resistance point which is beginning to hold back the advance of his entire line of attack of three divisions. He knows that, if he concentrates upon a frontal attack at this point, not only will his line on both sides be forced to check still further until success is gained, but that the enemy, at the first sign of that check, will counter-attack in force, and will throw him from the offensive to the defensive. He presses the attack, therefore, with his two flank divisions, ordering them to go as far forward on each side of that central enemy resistance point as they can, exploiting his superiority on each flank in an enveloping attack; with the result that the enemy, within that position, seeing that he is being passed on both sides by the advancing troops, and that he is in imminent danger of being surrounded and captured, retires without delay. Then the centre attacking division at once moves forward, the attacking line becomes uniform again in advanced territory, and the offensive proceeds. What that army corps commander accomplished by this operation, by pushing his advantage at the points at which he had superiority, was to pull up into line, with his most advanced elements, the forces at his disposal which were being checked and which were most backward. That, too, is exactly what we can do in our inner warfare, if only we do not persist in a frontal attack against some besetting sin or weakness,—which, too often, degenerates into merely sitting down in front of it, obsessed with the idea that we cannot make progress elsewhere until this resistance point of our inner enemy has first been overcome. Suppose, for instance, that a man is impatient. Instead of concentrating upon trying to conquer impatience, let him cultivate sympathy and understanding. Gradually, as he acquires these qualities, as he forges forward at these points, passing the old resistance point of the enemy, he will find that impatience is no longer on the front of his attack. Suppose that he is afraid. Concentration upon freeing his entire nature from the thought of self, upon putting first the thought of others, or of a Cause, will drive out fear. He may already feel sympathy and understanding, he may already desire courage, he may already long to be free of self, to be truly selfless. If so, he is already bringing more positive forces into being within himself. Therefore, as he presses forward on all sides in the effort to strengthen further those qualities which are the opposites of his faults, his hatred of impatience, his loathing of fear follow up as the old enemy gives ground, in the same way

that the centre division does in the attack of the army corps commander,—helping him to pull all his forces forward to a unified line from which his further inner advance may proceed. The dangers and the effort inherent in this kind of an attack, in our inner warfare, are nothing in comparison with those which we run in our persistence in a frontal effort, for once our inner enemy has held us up, once he sees that our forward movement has ceased, he will counter-attack on all sides without delay. Old temptations will arise then, old weaknesses will recur, and we shall be driven back; for we cannot remain stationary, and the ground that we thus lose we shall have to win again.

On no account, of course, must we allow our enemy to break through at our weak points: that would be fatal. Whenever we are attacked at those points—impatience, timidity, what not—we must resist to the death, both directly, and by special effort to dominate by means of the opposite virtue.

As the Meuse-Argonne operation progressed, the pressure upon the Message Centre increased, until it was functioning upon a permanently higher level of activity. It handled at that time as many as three thousand messages and despatches a day, although, of course, many of these were routed together, and went out by the same courier. The work that the motor-cycle drivers did was superb; their efforts were too little known, the part that they played in the War was too little understood, not nearly enough has been said or written about them. Often a rider would fall behind his schedule, and then we would try to pick up his location, so as to send another rider after him if necessary, in case he had been knocked out, for the despatches could not be delayed; we would telephone from point to point along his known route, over the military wires, in the effort to check up his arrivals and departures, and so to narrow down his probable position. Usually the delay was caused by the rider running into heavy shelling on the forward roads; when this happened, he would take refuge with his machine in some shell crater, and would remain there until the shelling was over, which might be a matter of twenty minutes or of two hours. Indeed, whenever there was heavy artillery fire in the forward areas, we knew that our service would be delayed, and when, in these circumstances, a Corps Message Centre would ring up to complain that our courier had not arrived, and to ask when he might be expected, we would reply that it would be just as soon as their Corps Artillery got on the job and put down the German batteries. It would never do, in the Army (beware of this in spiritual warfare!), to allow the suspicion to arise that delay had originated through any fault of one's own; the thing to do was to "pass the buck" like lightning to someone else, in this case the Corps Artillery. Sometimes a courier would be delayed by temporary illness. The constant pounding on a motor-cycle over roads that were full of holes and pits gradually came to have serious and chronic effects upon the internal organs of the riders, producing constant discomfort and often real physical anguish. Often, when the activity was at its height, I have seen one of my riders lifted off his machine when he came in, his face twisted with pain, unable to stand, and I have had to tell him, as he stood there supported by two mechanics, that I was sorry, but that he would

have to go out again in twenty minutes, as there was no one else who could be used. Invariably he would smile and reply, "All right, Captain". He would lie down, be dosed with strong, hot coffee, and at the end of twenty minutes be lifted on to his machine again and, with his jaw set, be off. They were a splendid lot, and their individual courage and tenacity had far more to do with the successful functioning of the First Army Staff, and indeed of the First Army itself, than was ever generally realized or appreciated.

About half-way through the Meuse-Argonne offensive, I made a survey of the transport under my command, and realized that, if my rolling-stock continued to depreciate at the rate it was doing, at the end of two weeks more the Message Centre would not be able to function properly. Something had to be done. Of course, I should be held responsible; but that was not the point; the main thing was, we simply *must* not break down. In order, therefore, to forestall any such contingency, and to place myself officially on record as having foreseen this danger, I addressed a letter, according to military procedure, to the Commanding General First Army, in which I outlined the situation in detail, drew my conclusions, and asked for certain specified additional transportation. The Army Commander never saw the letter, of course; it was endorsed over to the Colonel in charge of G-4, the Supply Section of the General Staff, whom I had never met, for his information and action. This letter was too much for the Colonel, who was driven to death and hard pressed, and he went completely up in the air, and dictated in reply a full-page endorsement consisting of five paragraphs, the gist of which was, who in blazes is this Captain, and why in blazes does he think that he should be given any new transportation, when there are such things as spare parts. I was dumbfounded, and thoroughly discouraged. I *had* to have that transportation, and, besides, it was the first serious trouble I had ever had with a superior, and I felt badly about that. But, after I had reread the letter several times, I thought that I saw the light. There *were* no such things as spare parts. A wise and beneficent Government at home, although it had sent to France any amount of motor transport, had never had the foresight to send consignments of spare parts, and, when motor transport broke down, the only way in general in which it could be repaired was to strip other motor transport, taken from active service, of the parts needed. There was, obviously, a limit to the extent to which this system of repairing would work. But the mention of spare parts was a weak spot in this reply, and it made a point of departure for a further effort; I was bound to have that transportation. Plunged, however, in deep gloom, I went to General Drum's office, only to find that he was absent that day, up at the front lines. The Deputy Chief of Staff was in charge, a Colonel, whom, fortunately, I had once known in civil life before the War, and with whom I had recently had several friendly passages. I showed him the correspondence, outlined my situation again, and asked him what, in the circumstances, I should do next. To my immense relief, he laughed immoderately when he had read the endorsement of the Colonel in charge of G-4, and said to me, "Don't you pay any attention to him. He is tired out from trying to make bricks without straw.

I know that you need more motor transport. You leave the correspondence with me, and I will see what I can do." I departed with a feeling of greater cheer, which turned to distinct elation a few days later, when I received all of the additional transportation for which I had asked.

Always, not only in the Seventy-seventh Division, but at First Army Corps Headquarters, and in my work at Headquarters First Army, I was fortunate in having the backing of someone higher up to bolster my lack of rank, and I was always, as it were, clothed with a mantle of delegated authority, and able to speak either as representing my Colonel, or as a direct subordinate of the Army Chief of Staff. It worked very well as far as attaining results was concerned, as my superiors were always generous in their support.

There is, I think, another parallel here between the way in which things are actually handled in the Army in wartime, and the manner in which the spiritual hierarchy utilizes those far down the line in their grades of rank and of attainment, in furthering that inner and unseen warfare which it is carrying on. I had entered the Army, an entirely new field, straight from civil life. I had no previous military experience or background whatever. All that I did have was a very real desire to serve, and to serve as efficiently and as loyally as I could. Probably my superiors, in succession, had recognized this. Possibly they had realized also that there were potentialities of performance in me which might be further developed, which did not warrant increase in rank while this attempt at development was in progress, but which could in the meanwhile be utilized for practical purposes under skilled direction. So, in successive instances, I was clothed with an authority delegated from above, beyond that of my actual rank, and was told to go ahead, while watchful eyes were kept upon my progress. Certainly that is exactly what happens in the inner life, in the life and order of the spiritual world, when there is real devotion and self-giving, when there is a real desire truly to serve, when trial has been made and a certain degree of trustworthiness has been proved. At that low level of the spiral of spiritual ascent, one can of oneself do nothing. But if such qualities are present, it is possible for those superior in rank in the hierarchy, to use such an aspirant to further in the world the purposes of the Lodge itself. Under direction, undeveloped inner abilities are utilized, growing perception and discrimination are increased, devotion and understanding are strengthened. The status of the individual, his rank in the hierarchy, do not change; he must be tested, perhaps for long years, before promotion can come. But he is given, in advance of his qualifications for actually holding that rank, opportunities for work which properly belong to a higher grade than he has yet proved himself capable of functioning in consistently and permanently,—work, not of his own choosing, but of theirs; work pre-eminently adapted to further his inner growth and his development; work which he can do effectively at the point at which he finds himself, by virtue of an authority delegated to him from above.

It should be easy to see from this narrative that my work at the Message Centre had now become almost entirely of a confining and administrative

nature, requiring constant application and watchfulness. I rarely left Souilly, my peregrinations consisting of only three or four motor trips upon occasions when I had to go personally; usually I sent one of my subordinates, as I felt that, to be most effective, I must keep myself uninterruptedly in a position in which I could maintain my perspective, not only of details, but of the whole picture. I was usually able to secure enough sleep, for my organization had become efficient, and the officer whose turn it was for night duty was almost always able to carry on alone until morning without help or consultation. My faithful striker always awakened me early, shut my window, and lit the smoky stove in my room, for that autumn it rained constantly and the air was unbelievably chill and penetrating. He then retired outside, to clean and polish my leathers. His retirement was the signal for me to cover my head with the blankets, until the smoke from the stove had penetrated sufficiently within my covering to make me cough. I then shouted, and my striker returned, and opened the window again to let out the smoke. By this simple method, enough heat was finally retained in the room to make it possible to wash and dress without one's fingers becoming absolutely numb. If any extended lull in official duties occurred during the day, I took a short walk, my favourite objectives being the aviation field, where it was possible to converse with the fliers, and the hospital, where I got to know some of the sick and wounded, and made friends with several of the doctors. It was not much in the way of variety, but it was all that offered.

No official Tables of Organization for a Message Centre at the headquarters of a field army were in existence, as it was an entirely new affair as far as our Army was concerned. The First Army Message Centre had evolved, over a comparatively short period of time, to the going concern which it then was. As I had probably had as much to do with that evolution as anyone else, I was told to draw up tentative general Tables of Organization, and to submit them in the form of a report, with suggestions and recommendations based upon experience. I spent much time over this monumental work, adding to its theoretical paper strength everything which I needed myself at the moment to round out my own picture, and duly turned it in. I never heard anything more about it, and I imagine that, if it is still in existence, it is probably lying in the basement of some building in the War Department at Washington, safely buried. When the Headquarters of the Second American Army was organized, however, I was able to labour somewhat more effectively, for the officer who was to be in charge there was sent over to Souilly to study my organization; he spent a couple of days with us, if I remember correctly, and I heard later on that the Second Army Message Centre was modelled directly on ours.

Some weeks after the event I heard that General Craig, when he had become Chief of Staff of our Third Army, had asked for me to go with him to Germany to take charge of his Army Message Centre, but that General Drum had refused to let me go. That refusal was a direct interposition of divine providence. Without it, I should have spent the winter and the following spring on the

Rhine, and I should never have been able to return to the United States as soon as I did. But it was satisfactory to know that I had been wanted.

Often at Souilly, when I was returning from mess after dark to my evening's work, I would stop at the village church for the service which was held there two or three nights each week. The church was a large one, and the congregation, always small, seemed tiny in that edifice and in the semi-total darkness, for the only illumination came from two or three candles at the foot of the chancel steps, the light from which was not sufficiently bright to cast any beam upon the ground outside, especially as the windows were high up on the church walls. A few American soldiers were usually there, a few French, either wounded or *en permission*, and invariably each man sat alone, where it was darkest, a little way back in the pews. The remainder of the congregation was composed entirely of women and children. The rays from the candles, feeble as they were, reached to the Cross upon the altar and illumined it; sometimes, it seemed to me, that Cross shone with a special effulgence, with a distinct radiance of its own, towering above that small gathering, as the Figure hanging there looked down in compassion. The organ—a parlour-organ we should have called it at home—had been moved to the floor of the church at the foot of the chancel steps, and the women and children grouped themselves around it on little chairs. When the service and the singing were over, the curé came down, and stood on the bottom step and preached. No, he just talked; talked heart to heart with them, as he stood in the midst of his little flock. He was tall and thin, with a crown of white hair; always he made me think of Cardinal Mercier. Perhaps it was because he was doing, in his small way, the same thing that the great Cardinal was then doing. He was holding things together. He talked quite simply of the necessity for fortitude and for endurance, perhaps for still a long time to come; of continued sacrifice, reminding them that the spirit in which they made their own denials had its part in reinforcing the spirit of France; of the absolute certainty of ultimate victory, of the need for final perseverance, of enduring to the end. All in the simplest possible words, in terms that they could all easily understand. As he stood there, pausing in his talk, his hand on the head of a child, other children sitting on the step at his very feet, the silence unbroken save for some woman's sobs, there came to me, again and again, a further realization of the deathless spirit of France. No enemy from without can ever break that spirit. Her own enemies, from within, may perhaps warp it, but never for long, for it comes direct from the spiritual world, a living force that is tempered and true. It is rooted and grounded in Reality itself. It is based upon a love and a devotion that are divine in their essence, upon a faith that knows that to it there will be granted more than it is possible to ask or to desire.

CENTURION.

(To be continued)

PRAYER-WHEELS OR POWER?

DO theosophists believe in prayer? In reply, said Madame Blavatsky in *The Key to Theosophy*, ". . . not in prayer taught in so many words and repeated externally, if by prayer you mean the outward petition to an unknown God as the addressee." Through the years since the book was published, such newcomers to the Society as cherished a long-standing aversion to prayer, have had a triumphant conviction that a Daniel had come to judgment and that their scepticism was thereby justified. The subsequent portions of the chapter were easily passed over—too enigmatic, too occult, perhaps, to hold the attention. But what, for instance, is the "will-prayer" referred to later? If it is, as stated, an internal command, whom do we command? How is it done? What is its purpose? What effect does it have?

Prayer is a subject which can be discussed, except by those who are far-advanced on the path, only at the risk of finding oneself, without warning, where angels fear to tread. The purpose of the present article, however, is not to discuss but simply to bring together—without apology for almost continual quotation—certain long-ago writings from a school of thought other than Theosophy, on the chance that their rather surprising relationship to the chapter in the *Key*, and the hints they afford, may prove of use to someone. Those who are familiar with manuals on the subject will doubtless recall the enumeration they give of the various purposes of prayer: the prayer of petition (for oneself or for others, both living and dead); the prayer of thanksgiving, the prayer of praise, and so on. It is a vast subject, with many aspects and many possible angles of approach; and to bring it within the scope of an article, the quotations here brought together have been chosen chiefly for their bearing on the rather limited aspect of the effect of prayer on the one who prays.

Discussing the widespread scepticism toward prayer to-day, a modern writer, E. Herman, in the book *Creative Prayer*, blames in large measure the externalism with which most public praying is done—perfunctorily in some gatherings, emotionally in others, with a conventional religiosity which tragically prejudices those who confuse it with real religion.

To put it bluntly, for the average person of to-day, the term "spiritual" is equivalent to unpractical, if not illusory. Throughout the Church there are sincere, earnest, thoughtful people, sensitive to the finest issues and honestly striving to serve God, who look upon much praying with undisguised suspicion, as based upon a crude and childish conception of God. . . . For generations we have, to all practical intents and purposes, regarded prayer in a deplorably mechanical way, as a process of importunate pleading and begging. I am not referring to our deliberate theories of prayer—the best mind of the Church in all ages has held a noble theory of prayer—but to our practice. As a matter of fact, we have proceeded as if prayer consisted in asking for various temporal and spiritual blessings with reiterative intensity, implying that, provided we asked earnestly enough and persistently enough, God would surely respond to our cry. . . . Prayer has

become to hundreds of men and women who have outgrown the traditional conception of God either a mere pious sentiment or an outworn superstition. We suffer in fact from arrested development in prayer.

One might go further and say that a large majority of people have no idea what prayer is—could not know, for they never have lived in that part of their natures, never have used the faculties which make real prayer a possibility. Yet they do not hesitate to scoff. For information regarding any subject, the modern world always seeks a "specialist", and specialists in prayer are the product, not of our modern age, but of a different spirit, a different attitude toward life. Several centuries ago, there were many of them, and they used a terminology which often compels us to do a certain amount of translating; yet frequently it is but a step from one to the other. When we read in the *Key*, "Grant us our postulate that God is a universally diffused, infinite principle, and how can man alone escape from being soaked through by, and in, the Deity?" —there is no great distance between that and the statement from John of the Cross, "There are three ways in which God is present in the soul. The first is his presence in essence, not in holy souls only, but in wretched and sinful souls as well, and also in all created things; for it is by this presence that he gives life and being, and were it withdrawn, at once all things would return to nothing. This presence never fails in the soul. . . ."

In the realm of prayer, Teresa of Avila, the 16th century Spanish nun, canonized by the Church, went farther, perhaps, than anyone else in the western world whose experience has been recorded. Her analyses of her experience, notably in her Autobiography and the book known as *The Interior Castle;* also, in a different way, her chapters on the Lord's Prayer in *The Way of Perfection*,—throw invaluable light both on what prayer is and on what it is not, and above all, on how it is to be done. On one point she was in entire accord with the *Key*, and her statement of it might well be placed in large letters before every church congregation:

If it is prayer at all, the mind must take part in it. . . . If a person neither considers to Whom he is addressing himself, what he asks, nor what he is who ventures to speak to God, although his lips may utter many words, I do not call it prayer. The custom of speaking to God Almighty as freely as with a slave—caring nothing whether the words are suitable or not, but simply saying the first thing that comes to mind from being learnt by rote by frequent repetition—cannot be called prayer: God grant that no Christian may address Him in this manner.

As for what does constitute prayer, *The Scale of Perfection*, the 14th century manual by Walter Hilton, expresses it:

When thy desire and mind is gotten up, and as it were set free from all fleshly thoughts and affections, and is much lifted up by spiritual power unto spiritual favour and delight in Him and of His spiritual presence; hold thou therein much of thy time of prayer, so that thou have no great mind of earthly things, or if they come into thy mind that they do but trouble or affect thee little. If thou canst pray thus, thou prayest well, for prayer is nothing else but an ascending or getting up of the desire of the heart into God by withdrawing of it from all earthly thoughts. Therefore it is likened to a fire which, of its own nature, leaveth the lowness of the earth and always mounteth up into the air,

even so desire in prayer, when it is touched and kindled of the spiritual fire, which is God, is ever aspiring up to Him that it came from.

A radiant outgoing to infinite Being is an expression given it in theosophical writings.

All of the early mystical writers agree on a certain classification: first vocal prayer (any that is spoken); higher than that, mental prayer (expressed only in the mind or the heart), then several degrees, each more interior, more elevated, more close to Reality than the one preceding. Vocal prayer, though lowest in the scale, has its value, serving as a crutch, so to speak, in certain circumstances, and also being a necessity for beginners, not yet accustomed to dwell with spiritual things. Hilton, discussing several kinds of vocal prayer and the need for it, writes:

He that cannot run easily and lightly by spiritual prayer, his feet of knowledge and love being feeble and sick by reason of sin, hath need of a firm staff to hold by, which staff is set forms of vocal prayer ordained by God and Holy Church for the help of men's souls; by which the soul of a fleshly man that is alway falling downward into worldly thoughts and sensual affections shall be lifted up above them, and holden up as by a staff, and fed with the sweet words of those prayers as a child with milk, and guarded and held up by them that he fall not into errors or fancies through his vain imaginations.

Likewise vocal, but a very different type of prayer, is the expression of deep feeling, a sudden outpouring, as when "he crieth with desire of heart and speech of mouth to our Lord for succour and for help", or "at other times there appears to him to be so much goodness and grace and mercy in God that it delighteth him with great affection of heart to love Him, and thank Him".

"The third sort of prayer", says the same writer, "is only in the heart without speech, with great rest and quietness both of soul and body. A pure heart it behoveth him to have that shall pray after this manner; for such only attain to it who by long travail both of body and soul, or else by such sharp touches or motions of love, as I have before mentioned, have arrived to rest of spirit, so that his affections are turned into spiritual savour and relish, that he is able to pray continually in his heart." There is scarcely a phrase in this passage which might not well be italicized. It gives in a few words what probably was the fruit of a lifetime of experience in praying.

For the stages above this, no certain rule can be set, "for they are the free gift of the Lord, according to divers dispositions of chosen souls". These higher stages, which of course are the ones which St. Teresa analysed most fully, Hilton calls meditation, and this is the point where the subject becomes a vital one to many students of Theosophy, for it is safe to assume that practically all serious students of Theosophy are interested in the subject of meditation, have experimented with it to some extent, perhaps for many years, and have found it, in many cases, baffling and discouraging. The testimony of these mediæval writers would seem to be that prayer of the right sort is a necessary preliminary to successful meditation, one of the lower steps in a ladder. St. Teresa makes the statement in her Autobiography: "It is necessary to remark (and I speak of this fact, because I know the truth of it by experience), that a soul which

begins to walk in this way of mental prayer, with a firm determination not to make much account whether she receive many consolations or none at all [that is, whether she perceive results or no] such a soul has already passed over the greater part of the road, and she need have no fear of going back again, whatever obstacles she may meet with, for the building is placed on a solid foundation." In the same volume, referring to certain of the high degrees of meditation and contemplation to which she attained, she says that they came "almost always after a long exercise of mental prayer". The general testimony is that one degree grows out of another: prayer, meditation, contemplation. Those who attained greatly, often did so only after years of hard labour in the lower degrees, and even those far advanced returned to them at times, as a means of starting the springs to flowing. The raw recruit cannot become a soldier except by long drill. To try to dispense with the lower degrees and begin midway, would seem to be courting difficulty.

It goes almost without saying that Madame Blavatsky was not condemning real prayer in the sentence already quoted. She came to attack shams, to expose falsity, to sweep away the outworn and lifeless. She condemned empty, perfunctory lip-prayer and laid herself open to misunderstanding, just as she incurred the charge of atheism by her attack on an outgrown and lifeless conception of God. "We reject the idea of a personal, or extra-cosmic and anthropomorphic God, who is but the gigantic shadow of man, and not even of man at his best. The God of theology, we say—and prove it—is a bundle of contradictions and a logical impossibility." Instead, "we believe in a Universal Divine Principle, the root of All, from which all proceeds, and within which all shall be absorbed at the end of the great cycle of Being." Here as always, in sweeping away the old, she replaced it with a bigger, nobler concept, vibrant with life. It will be remembered that the *Key*, after questioning whether there *is* any other kind of prayer than words or petitions, replies: "Most decidedly; we call it *will-prayer*, and it is rather an internal command than a petition."

This sentence, puzzling and perhaps misleading to many, finds an unexpected commentator in the unknown author of the mediæval treatise, *The Divine Cloud* or *The Cloud of Unknowing*. His system, already outlined in an earlier QUARTERLY, required long training and discipline, until, through complete withdrawal from the sense of selfhood and intense concentration on the simple Be-ness of the Deity, one learned to pray "in the silence of pure spirit",—a degree of "innerness" that is difficult for the lower mind to do more than dimly sense. None but the trained disciple could have practised either this type of prayer, or that which seems to correspond to the will-prayer of the *Key*. The latter type the author outlines, explaining that it must be reduced to the fewest words possible, preferably one-syllable words—and uses a quaint analogy to make clear the reason:

> A man or a woman, being made afraid of some sudden chance of fire, or of the killing of a man, or of any other vehement accident, is driven, by reason of the suddenness of the thing, and of his necessity, to cry or to pray for help. And how doth he cry? Forsooth, not in many words, nor yet in one word of two syllables. And why? Because he

thinketh it overlong to tarry about the declaring of his necessity, and of the agony of his spirit; and therefore he bursteth out vehemently and crieth out with some one word, and that of one syllable, as is this word "Fire!" or else this word "Help!" or such like. Now, like as this little word "Fire!" pierceth the ears of the hearers sooner, and stirreth their affection more effectually than a longer discourse doth, even so doth a short word of one syllable sound in the ears of Almighty God; not only when it is spoken or thought, but also when it is inwardly meant in the deepness of spirit.

Why, he asks, should this prayer of one syllable have such efficacy? "Forsooth, because it is prayed with a full spirit, to wit, in the height and depth, in the length and breadth of his spirit that prayeth."

And remembering that we pray either to acquire a good or to rid ourselves of an evil,—then since "all good things are comprehended in God, and all evils in sin . . . let us when we mind intentively to pray for the removing of evil, either say or think or mean only this little word 'sin', and no more. And likewise, if we mean intentively to pray for the obtaining of good things, let us cry either with word or with thought, or else with desire, only this short word 'God' and no more; for in God are all good things, both as in their cause, as also in their essence or being."

If some other word be preferred, well and good, but whatever the word chosen, it should be dwelt upon until one's spirit is filled with its meaning—not thinking of this or that special kind of "sin", but "Thou must have such an estimate of sin, that thou feel it to be a lump thou wotest not what; but surely none other thing than thine own self. And feeling it so, cry out upon it only, and say, 'Sin, sin, sin, out, out, out'. Now, like as thou hast done with this word 'sin', even so do with this word 'God'."

To modern ears it sounds strange, cold perhaps, and lacking the fire which the author evidently felt; but within it is at least a clue to the rationale of will-prayer. The written word *is* cold as a medium of expression for living inner experience, unless the reader intend upon and enter into the idea until it becomes a living thing for him as well. Hilton is speaking in an age of faith, to those who had given themselves to a life of prayer and had had long experience, and his urgent message is that to crown their effort, to make their prayer "rise suddenly unto God", they must throw into it all the force of every atom of their being. There is a footnote in *The Secret Doctrine* which has bearing on this method: "The words 'whosoever shall say to this mountain be thou removed and cast into the sea, and *shall not doubt*, that thing will come to pass', are no vain words. Only the word 'faith' ought to be translated by *will*. Faith without Will is like the wind-mill without *wind*—barren of results" (Vol. II, p. 59, Ed. 1888). It will be remembered, too, that the opening sentences of the Lord's Prayer—"Thy Kingdom come", and so on—are phrased as commands, and obviously involve *will*.

Will-power becomes a living power as a result of prayer, says the *Key*, a statement at once suggestive of those enigmatical sentences in *The Secret Doctrine* about Kriyâshakti, the mysterious power of thought enabling it to produce external, perceptible, phenomenal results by its own inherent energy (a mys-

terious and divine power latent in the will of every man),—which, coupled with Ichchhâshakti, the power of the will, works miracles.

Real prayer is a mystery, the *Key* continues, "an occult process by which finite and conditioned thoughts and desires, unable to be assimilated by the absolute spirit which is unconditioned, are translated into spiritual wills and the will; such process being called 'spiritual transmutation'." Then those lines, perhaps the most important in the whole chapter: "The intensity of our ardent aspirations changes prayer into the 'philosopher's stone', or that which transmutes lead into pure gold. The only homogeneous essence, our 'will-prayer', becomes the active or creative force, producing effects according to our desire."

Here lies the essential difference between prayer as usually practised and prayer in accordance with Theosophy: the fact that, according to the latter, prayer creates, and the fact (made clear in many theosophical writings) that it reacts on ourselves, that it is ourselves we are creating. The great mystics experienced this, discovered it, for themselves. By praying greatly, they came to love greatly, and in loving, they grew into conformity of will with the Beloved, and then gradually into conformity of their entire being. They were made over, were born anew, as a result of the creative power of prayer. In the process, they developed occult faculties, acquired in some cases certain of the powers of the chêla, and learned by experience some of the most esoteric teachings of Theosophy. They did this simply and naturally without a planned advance, just as an explorer presses forward into unknown country. Theosophy teaches that it may be done, can be done, by planned effort, with the sure knowledge that if certain steps be taken, certain results will follow.

This creative aspect of prayer, has not been glimpsed by the world at large, or by the average man who prays, yet actually it involves little more in the beginning than a matter of emphasis, a difference in centre of gravity: the difference between *obtaining* and *being* or *becoming*. In some respects, the distinction is rather elusive, and it may be made clearer by an illustration,—that of a young woman who had been reduced to despair by a serious estrangement. Having tried every outer means to undo the past, and being devout both by nature and training, she turned to prayer as the only remedy left. She would pray with all her might for a year, that the break be mended. The year passed —without visible result. With hope and faith alike gone, and feeling that she had done her full part, she declared she was "through with religion for life". To those who knew her, it was an illuminating experience. She was headstrong, selfish and indolent. Had the high gods granted her prayer, a repetition of her difficulties in no long time would have been inevitable. Yet her instinct was right and true. Continued prayer, with the right emphasis—not on obtaining an outer thing, but on creating, on *becoming*—would have rid her of the defects which caused the trouble and could equally have developed qualities with which to win and hold those she loved.

As so often happens, a difference which seems trifling in its beginnings leads to final results which are poles apart. Madame Blavatsky in the *Key*, just as she says little of the preparatory stages, merely hints at the way that lies ahead,

leaving it for the seeker to discover for himself. Quoting the biblical verse, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name [that of the Christos] that will I do," she writes,—

> If we accept it [the quotation] esoterically, with the full knowledge of the meaning of the term Christos, which to us represents Âtmâ-Buddhi-Manas, the SELF, it comes to this: the only God we must recognize and pray to, or rather act in unison with, is that Spirit of God of which our body is the temple, and in which it dwelleth. . . . We believe in "communion" and simultaneous action in unison with our "Father in secret"; and, in rare moments of ecstatic bliss, in the mingling of our higher soul with the universal essence, attracted as it is towards its origin and centre; a state called during life Samâdhi, and after death, Nirvâna.

It is really this concept of prayer in its larger sense (prayer-meditation-contemplation as a creative process) which gives the other main tenets of Theosophy their practical significance and makes them more than a splendid theory. In the light of this concept, the teaching of the fundamental Unity of all things takes on vital significance as making possible the at-one-ment of the individual with the Divine above and about him. In its light, the doctrine of Karma shows that our circumstances are merely the field in which we work; that they point the way; that they are self-made, the effect of past right- or wrong-creation, and that the only way to change them essentially is by this process of re-creating ourselves, and thereby producing a new chain of effects. In its light, the doctrine of Reincarnation affords time, through life after life, in which to carry forward the work. And finally this concept coupled with the teaching of the "Father in secret" (as the *Key* calls it), the Master as he is referred to elsewhere, supplies the Instructor, the Guide, the Way by which man shall advance, in ever-growing consciousness, through a future that knows no end,—shall win immortality.

P.

Death to ourselves is the teaching wrapped in the mystery of the Nativity. Could we but understand this as the Saints have understood it, with what ardour we should plunge ourselves into that death to nature, which brings forth the Soul into divine life!—ANON.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE Recorder had explained to his friends as they assembled, that, a few days before, he had met one of the younger members who had asked him questions which he, the Recorder, believed would be of general interest, and that consequently he had invited his questioner to their meeting that afternoon. The younger member arrived promptly, and after a word or two from the Recorder, began, by general request, to state his difficulties.

"It is good of you", he began, "to let me discuss my problems with you. I am always afraid that I may be making mountains out of mole-hills, but the truth is that I find myself in a state of muddle, trying to reconcile the views of older students of Theosophy, whose absolute rightness it seems almost disloyal to question, with the views of other friends, who are not interested in Theosophy, but who think idealistically, and who are unselfish and sincere in their aims."

"Forgive me if I interrupt you so soon", said the Philosopher, "but please at once get rid of the idea that it can be disloyal to question the rightness of *any* student of Theosophy from H.P.B. and Judge, down to its exponents of to-day. Absolute rightness does not exist in this world, and even if it did, it is a fundamental principle of Theosophy that another person's perception of Truth can at best serve us as a working hypothesis, until we have tested it, not only intellectually, but in the laboratory of life itself, that is, in the light of universal experience, and, above all, by setting it to work, by trying it out, in our daily contact with the world. It is the lazy man who persuades himself that he 'knows' something merely because he has heard it stated 'authoritatively', and because, off-hand, he sees no reason why it shouldn't be true."

"May I also suggest", added the Historian, "that it takes two to tell the truth: one to speak it, and the other to hear it. A dozen Adepts, one after the other, might expound the same truth to a man, each in a different way,—and he might completely misunderstand their meaning, and pass on that misunderstanding to others as the ultimate expression of Wisdom. Particularly is this likely to happen when theosophical principles are in question, because most minds are wooden in their interpretation and application of principles of any kind; in addition to which my own experience is that, in the most ordinary matters, real understanding of our thought, wishes, and even of what we imagine to be our explicit directions, is astonishingly rare; and of course we misunderstand others at least as much as they misunderstand us."

"I see all that", said our friend, with a perhaps justifiable shade of impatience. "None the less it is difficult to shake off the feeling that someone who has studied Theosophy for more years than I have lived, must have a better grasp of the subject than I have, and that to question his interpretation would be presumptuous."

"Stop, think, look, listen!" exclaimed the Philosopher, laughing. "You have been to college; you have listened to lectures. You would indeed have been foolish to imagine that you knew more about chemistry or botany or anatomy than your old Professor; but all he could do or could attempt to do was to give you the result of his own study and experience, while insisting that, by repeating the experiments or dissections he described, you *must* verify for yourself the truth of his instruction. Nothing would have pleased him better, *after* you had done that, than intelligent questioning of his results."

"But Theosophy is not only a science; it is an art, a philosophy,—an interpretation and explanation of life and its causes, seen and unseen!"

This pleased the Philosopher. "True", he said; "but once more return to your experience at college. There were teachers and teachers, some good, some bad; and you realize now that the best were not those who taught you most, by rote, at the moment, but those who filled you with love of their subject and an ardent and lasting desire to learn more, always more, about it. Whatever your reaction at the time, looking back on your experience you probably see that while one Professor was using his lectures on literature as an opportunity to advocate Communism, or to ventilate his hatred of religion, another devoted his energies to belittling the Victorians in favour of the Elizabethans or perhaps of ultra-moderns, while a third was a mere grammarian. You were fortunate if you encountered one who dealt primarily with underlying principles, and who tried to give you the intellectual background, and especially the appreciation of content, form, atmosphere, which would make you a discriminating lover of literature for the rest of your life.

"Apply that to those who expound Theosophy. Think of the materialistic interpretations of Mrs. Besant, the psychic perversions and perversities of Leadbeater, the pontifical attitude of so many others. Râmanathan came from the East as an exponent of Theosophy, and, in a New York drawing-room, to a group of students, suddenly announced: 'Now I will tell you all about God'! Not a flicker of a smile: he imagined he was being kind and generous in thus opening the flood-gates of his wisdom. That was many years ago, and I doubt if anyone would be so crudely dogmatic and untheosophical to-day; but human nature still remains the same, and the upshot of it all is that, as Judge so often warned us, we must use discrimination always, and must never be satisfied with any statement about Theosophy until reason and intuition and experience combine to convince us of its truth."

"Does that mean that we should think things out for ourselves, without the aid of others? Was I wrong, perhaps, in asking for this opportunity to submit my problems to you, who are older students?"

"It certainly does not! Think again: is a practising physician, puzzled by the symptoms of a patient, wrong to seek whatever light he can gain by consultation with his elders? On the other hand, if he were blindly to accept some proffered opinion, without thought, without reference to his own experience or to his first-hand knowledge of the case; if he were to wash his hands of responsibility because an opinion was backed by a great reputation,—he would not be

acting theosophically, even though the ethics of his profession, outwardly at least, were to justify such an attitude. . . . But, may I ask, what is your specific problem?''

"I have more than one", was the reply. "My first is the question of social responsibility. Granted that the universe exists for purposes of the soul, and that making people's bodies comfortable may not help their souls,—does that exonerate us from responsibility in trying to better the appalling conditions which exist around us at any point at which we come into contact with them?"

The questioner seemed to turn to the Student rather than to the Philosopher for reply; so the former, keenly interested, did not hesitate. "There is confusion of thought in your statement", he said. "Who are 'us'; who are 'we'? Get rid of that indefinite 'we'; make it 'I' and then 'he',—and you will almost have solved your problem. 'The duty of another is full of danger'; your duty may be entirely different from the duty of your neighbour, even though his education, circumstances and age may be very like your own.

"A man's natural duty, or path through life, is laid out for him, prior to incarnation, by Karma, or the Divine Law, and throughout incarnation his higher self tries to keep him to that path, while his lower nature frequently incites him to depart from it. It would be legitimate, I think, to say that every man has a vocation, using that term in the religious, not in the secular sense,—using it as covering 'my duty towards God and my duty towards my Neighbour' as defined in the Catechism, with emphasis on the oft-quoted conclusion: 'And to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me.' Very few, of course, think of life in those terms. The fact remains that if we omit from our calculations the divine plan and purpose, not only for the world, but for every individual in it, we can never so much as formulate the problem of individual duty, nor understand why two men may rightly follow totally different paths, nor realize that a man's divinely appointed path is determined far more by the sort of experience he needs for his development than by what he may be able to accomplish outwardly. In other words: God can get along quite well without my contribution, if only for the reason that I cannot as yet appreciably contribute; but, because I am his child, my education, in the most comprehensive sense, concerns him vitally.

"Necessarily, in direct though restricted reply to your question, it must be inherent in every man's vocation to do what he can to relieve the distress with which he comes into contact,—not only bodily distress, please note, but, if he be able, the far more 'appalling' distress of heart and mind which our present civilization engenders: that bitterness which lack of faith and understanding leaves in the natural and inevitable wounds caused by death and disaster. 'To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction', and to give comfort where we can, subject to our fundamental vocation, must always be included as part of the Divine Will for us."

"What do you mean by: 'subject to our fundamental vocation'?"

"I mean that if a man's real vocation be that of a soldier, or a woman's, that of wife and mother, it would be wrong for either of them to neglect their very

exacting primary duties by seeking or creating opportunities, outside their immediate environment, to change conditions in the world around them. They should leave wholesale reform, if there be such a thing, to those whose special vocation that is."

"Will you please illustrate just what you mean by 'vocation',—actual examples? They would help me, I think, to understand."

"A man may be 'called' to be a soldier, like Kitchener or Foch, both of whom were keenly aware that that was their vocation; or he may be 'called' to be a monk, like St. Francis or St. Benedict; a statesman, like Sully; an artist, like Rembrandt (you will remember that, the son of a miller, he began his career as an etcher and painter at the age of twelve); a philanthropist, like that Earl of Shaftesbury who devoted his life to the better treatment of lunatics and of all who were down-trodden and oppressed; or it may be his vocation—none the less real, none the less God's call to him, and therefore just as important a part of the divine economy—humbly to follow in the footsteps of his forebears as a tiller of the soil.

"Similarly, it may be the vocation of a woman to serve as a wife and mother, while her sister may be 'called' to become a nun, 'contemplative' or 'active' as the case may be. Another woman's vocation may be in the sphere of art or literature,—even of science, as we see in the case of Madame Curie, whose marriage appears to have been a scientific partnership more than anything else."

"What, then, should be my attitude toward an acquaintance, perhaps younger than I am, who feels drawn toward social reform? Should I do what I can to encourage or discourage him?"

"Let me ask you a question: I once heard of a girl whose mother was a chronic invalid and bed-ridden. The girl decided that she had a vocation for nursing, but that to give her vocation free scope (perhaps get away from the boredom of nursing her mother), she must become a trained nurse in some hospital. Was that girl's decision right or wrong? And why?"

"Did the girl have to contribute to the support of her mother?"

"No."

"I should suppose, in that case, that her first duty would be to her mother."

"Exactly; which helps to make it clear that we must not confuse vocation with inclination. To abandon duty in order to follow inclination, is to indulge selfishness. So, in the case of your acquaintance who feels drawn toward social reform, the first question is, whether he is free to follow his inclination. I have met plenty of young men in the Latin Quarter of Paris, studying art, who were confident they had the vocation of a Rembrandt, but who ought to have been helping in the family grocery or drug store in some small town in the Middle West, instead of eating up the family savings in Paris,—only to end as pavement artists or taxi drivers. However, assuming independent means and no home duties, a young man is surely at liberty to devote himself to social reform in any way he prefers, if he believes that to be his vocation, and I do not see why you should either encourage or discourage him, unless he should seriously consult you. In that case, as a student of Theosophy, you might well help him to

clarify his own aims, which, in all probability, are hazy: the result of emotion unchecked by reason,—a well-meaning but uninformed desire to be 'useful'. Help him to define his aims, and then to gauge the means by which he hopes to attain them. Without any thought of turning him into a Theosophist, see if you can interest him in a study of the underlying instead of the superficial causes of human suffering."

"The case I have actually in mind", said the younger student, "is that of an acquaintance who is obliged to earn his own living, and who is thinking of doing so by means of his interest in social welfare."

"He had better imitate St. Paul, and earn his living as a tent-maker", the Student answered. "If St. Paul had accepted a salary from the group in Jerusalem, he would have sold half his freedom. A vocation is not necessarily the activity by means of which a man earns his living. He may be a doctor, or Wall Street broker, or a mechanic, with discipleship, in the theosophic sense, as his vocation. In that case he would use his outer activities as opportunities for inner discipline and creative work, while his spare time would be devoted to his major purpose. As always, it is the motive that counts, and motives range all the way from selfishness to the most complete self-giving. Think of the different motives that may actuate a school-teacher: to inculcate a creed, to earn an honest living, to support an aged mother, to earn a living while striving to raise the level of education either for humanitarian or for spiritual ends."

"A friend of mine is in trouble because his father, who is an officer in the army, is intensely anxious that his son shall follow in his footsteps, while the son hates the idea and longs to become an architect."

"Most architects nowadays are starving, and the father may know it! But I realize, of course, that that is no answer to your question. Parents often are unwise in their desire that the children they love should do as they have done. This is as true of parents who are students of Theosophy as of any others, though it ought not to be. It is only natural, however, that a father, or mother, who has found the solution of life's problems, and the compensation for life's sufferings, in the pursuit of discipleship, should long for the same blessing for a beloved child,—only natural and right; but experience has fully demonstrated that not one person in a million is 'called' to that high and splendid effort, and no greater mistake can be made than to attempt to push young people in that direction. It is another matter if they declare their desire for such a life, and appeal to their parents to support their resolution; but, ordinarily, it is the duty of parents to help their children to find their true vocation, whatever that may be, and then to help them to recognize its higher levels and to work for their attainment."

At this stage the Engineer stepped into the arena. "It comes to this," he said. "First, what is your own vocation? The answer is: that is for you to decide; you must thrash that out with your God; you may profitably consult others, but you alone, in the last analysis, can hear and follow. Second, do not confuse yourself by thinking of 'the young people of your age'. No two of them are alike, or can possibly have quite the same vocation. Deal with them one

at a time, as they consult you, and confine your efforts to helping each one to hear his own 'call'; help him to use both his head and his heart for this purpose, and then to interpret it on as high and as practical a level as he is capable of reaching,—and no higher."

"Well", said the younger student, "that does seem to make sense, and will probably make clearer sense when I have had time to think it over. I am very grateful to all of you. May I ask another question,—this time on behalf of a girl friend?"

As there was ready consent, he continued: "It is about women taking part in public life. Obviously that is not their true field, and yet with this topsy-turvy world, is it not wise to make the best of things, and encourage girls to fit themselves for some sort of useful work, and to uphold standards in the educational and business worlds, since uncertain conditions and other things make marriage less and less of a probability,—as a career for educated women? . . . That, as I understood her, is a summary of my friend's problem, which I discussed with her at some length, neither to her satisfaction nor my own."

"What was your difficulty?"

"It has been removed to a considerable extent by what has been said already in regard to vocations. Talking with my friend some weeks ago, I found myself in the position of a house divided against itself, one part of me agreeing with what I believed to be the ideal point of view as taught by Theosophy, and another part of me, especially in specific and practical cases, leaning strongly in favour of views held by liberal friends. The result was a fuzzy state of partial agreement with everyone, and no conviction of my own."

The candour of this, appealed to all of us; but the Engineer had to get something out of his system before continuing the discussion seriously.

"Please tell your friend", he said, "that I will concede her a free hand in any branch of public life on condition that she does not go into training for the Secretaryship of Labour."

The younger student saw the point and chuckled. "No danger of that in this case", he said. "Her father is a manufacturer, and has suffered,—which means that she has too!"

"Glad to hear it", the Engineer replied unsympathetically. "The more wide-spread the suffering, the sooner it will be over. We have had a dose which will not easily be forgotten. Never again, pray heaven! Why didn't they make her Secretary of the Navy while they were about it? It would have been just as suitable."

"Back to the point, please", interposed the Recorder.

"Very well", the Engineer agreed; "I have had my say, and should like the Student to resume."

"Briefly", responded the Student, "the 'fuzzy state' was due to lack of understanding. Once the doctrine of vocation is understood, there is no conflict between 'the ideal point of view as taught by Theosophy', and the views described as liberal. In fact, Theosophy provides the only view that *is* liberal."

He paused, and looked at his junior. "Are your liberal friends", he asked,

"prepared to recognize and respect the vocation of a contemplative nun, or of a Trappist monk, or of a Hindu *sannyasi*, or of a soldier, or of an expert in explosives who devotes himself heart and soul to perfecting depth-charges?"

"Perhaps not", replied the younger student. "But are you prepared to recognize and respect the vocation of a woman who devotes herself heart and soul to the enactment of laws for the abolition of slums?"

"Certainly we are", was the reply. "A butterfly may perform a useful and necessary function in the fertilization of certain plants, and in that sense has been 'called' to that service. The custodians of our National Parks have learned that the depredations of wolves and coyotes are essential to the well-being of herds of deer, and that, without these 'scourges', the unfit survive, and at last outnumber the fit. In all sincerity, however, I am not comparing your reformers to wolves,—or to butterflies: I am trying to emphasize and widen the application of a fundamental principle of Theosophy. In the human kingdom we must consider, first, the stage of evolution an individual has reached. You ask, in effect, whether it can be a man's (or a woman's) vocation to relieve distress, not only in his immediate environment, but on as large a scale as possible. My answer is, Yes; and he will (and should) do so according to his state of development, which means, according to his power of perception. He may do it in the hope of serving the divine purpose, which is the Cause of his Master; or he may do it for humanitarian and materialistic reasons. If, in his eyes, bodily suffering is the greatest of evils, he must necessarily be 'called' to relieve that, and may decide to become a doctor, or a charity worker, or a very unusual type of politician. It would be a crime to discourage him, or to try to divert his efforts into what, for others, would be higher channels. Naturally, however, if we think he is pursuing his end, in any of these directions, by wrong or foolish means, and our relations with him should warrant the expression of an opinion, we might properly criticize his procedure and suggest methods more likely to achieve his ends—his own ends, please note. And I have found in this connection that historical illustration has more weight than philosophical argument. For example (if you will pardon a moment's digression), the very practical experience in the eighteenth century of that strange American, Benjamin Thompson, more widely known as Count Rumford of the Holy Roman Empire, is particularly instructive in these days of doles and governmental relief. Founder of The House of Industry in Munich, when, as Chief of Police, it became his duty to abolish the organized beggary which there had become a scourge, he proceeded on the principle, which he announced, that no one could be happy who was not industrious. Further:

> It is most certain that all sums of money or other assistance given to the poor in alms, which do not tend to make them industrious, never can fail to have a contrary tendency, and to operate as an encouragement to idleness and immorality.

"Those, therefore, who had never learned to work, must be taught how to do so. You have probably read of his extraordinary success: that he not only abolished mendicancy, but won the gratitude and affection of those who had once been professional beggars."

The Student paused. It was now the turn of the Philosopher to interject a thought which obviously had been worrying him. "The muddle of which you have accused yourself", he said, turning to the younger member, "arises in part, I think, from confusing a means of livelihood, with a vocation in the sense in which that word has been used here. Trying to state your friend's problem—about women taking part in public life—you asked if girls should not be encouraged to fit themselves for some sort of useful work, and 'to uphold standards in the educational and business worlds'. If a girl enters the world of business, not because she must, in order to earn her living, but as a missionary enterprise, my belief is she will have mistaken her vocation. She may hate the idea of going into business, and may try to console herself with the hope that she may be able 'to do some good' in such uncongenial surroundings; but she ought not to deceive herself by regarding this as a vocation: if she does, she will fail both in business and as a missionary. We must be honest and clear-cut in the recognition of our motives. It comes to this: Has a girl independent means? Will her parents be able to provide for her when they die? If not, she should of course prepare herself to earn her own living, taking into account her capacities and limitations, consulting her friends, and basing her decisions upon common sense. We should remember that the right performance of our duty, whatever that may be, is our real vocation, no matter how unromantic, insignificant, and devoid of public usefulness, the performance of our duty may seem to us to be. We should remember also that we can use the performance of any duty (though this is for the very few) as the best means to attain to union with the Divine.

"The girl who is and will be provided for sufficiently, can afford to ask herself if she is specially 'called' to do some outer work in the world, in the educational or any other field, regardless of the monetary results. Or she can afford to 'go in' for painting, writing, music, as she may desire; but I feel strongly that any girl, rich or poor, in addition to her other occupations, should prepare herself to take care of a home, seeing that the probabilities point to marriage sooner or later, and that for the man's sake as well as her own, the more she knows about house-keeping the better."

"Many girls marry nowadays", someone remarked, "who cannot sew on a button, much less darn a stocking, while all they know about providing a meal is to go or send for some cooked meats and perhaps a salad. This is just as true of the poor as of the well-to-do, because the city girl who works in a factory or office, leaves it to her mother to do the cooking and mending, with the result that, if she marries, her husband often goes through a period of digestive misery before his wife learns that marriage is not just a spree."

"The Philosopher spoke just now of girls who are and will be provided for financially, presumably by their parents", the Economist now volunteered. "May I say that in my opinion no such condition exists, either for girls or boys. The whole financial structure is being attacked so persistently, not any more by individuals only, but by governments with vast resources, that, in twenty years from now, all savings may have been swept away. If I had a million

dollars, and a daughter, I should want to provide for her by seeing to it that, if the worst came to the worst, she could earn her own living as a craftsman of some kind,—and I am not at all sure that old-fashioned sewing would not prove as safe a form of insurance as any other. I am told that fine sewing is almost a lost art, though the demand for it still exists and probably always will. But what are known as 'home industries' cover a wide field, and a boy can learn how to repair watches, or to mend and make furniture, or to do any one of fifty things that would provide him with a living in an emergency. The fate of so many Russian refugees from Bolshevist persecution, especially the women among them, as they found themselves penniless in the streets of Constantinople or Paris, ought to be sufficient warning. Further, it is distinctly wholesome for young people to learn how to use their hands profitably."

"You had other questions", said the Recorder, turning to the younger student.

"I have", was the answer; "but these I may find have been answered already when I come to think things over. There is this, however: I have wondered whether my feeling that Theosophy always pulls counter to the world is mistaken. All that tends towards goodness and unselfishness, on whatever plane, must be part of the work of the White Lodge, and any real effort to discover the Right must prove itself in action to be either erroneous or correct. Somehow I feel that the White Lodge could use all the strivings towards good of even the most misguided souls, and yet I know that it is often the best intentioned people who do the greatest harm. It is in talking and mingling with people of this type that I find myself hard put to it to know what attitude to take. Ought I, in brief, to fight the world wherever and whenever it fails to come up to the high ideals of Theosophy, or should I try to serve as a point of contact between the world in which my life is lived and the wonderful teaching which I love? In considering the latter possibility, I seem to stand on the edge of a great undiscovered country, which is waiting for us younger T.S. members to explore."

Said the Philosopher: "First in regard to the Lodge: it can and does use, and is thankful for all honest strivings towards the Good, as towards the True and the Beautiful. Such strivings, however, as you say, are often very blind, resulting sometimes in far more harm than good, that is, if we were to judge by outer effects alone,—which is what the Lodge never does, seeing that, with them, it is the motive that counts not the outer result. A clear understanding of this is essential if you would find answers to the questions you have raised. A German Nazi, who is self-sacrificingly devoted to his cause, and who sees in it the expression of all that is noble in life, may, in spite of his bad cause, be doing far better work for the White Lodge than a student of Theosophy who talks and writes about it self-seekingly. Look deeper still, and you will find that if the German Nazi's motive is good, his self-sacrifice will tend to destroy his bad cause, and that if the motives of a student of Theosophy are bad, his activities will tend to destroy his good cause. None the less, no matter how good the motive, a blundering method could not be encouraged by the Lodge, because, at best, such a method would involve waste of energy and time, even

if it did not result in positive injury to others. Very little can be done about it, however, unless people ask for advice, which is unusual. You may be able to interfere by force with the boy who thinks he can learn music by taking to pieces the family piano; but if, in Chicago, you encounter a stranger on his way to San Francisco who is actually heading for New York, while it would be but kind to warn him, the probability is he will be darkly suspicious of your intentions, will feel for his purse, and will wait till you are out of sight before continuing on his way.

"As a general rule, when you meet other young people who are working enthusiastically for one or another cause,—leave them alone; do not feel that because you are a student of Theosophy it is necessarily any part of your function either to encourage or discourage them. Opposition usually confirms their infatuation; and remember that in America as elsewhere in the world, you are likely to find among Collegians a considerable percentage of socialists, æsthetes, atheists, devil-worshippers, Bahaists, Bolshevists, and that these—as Sir Ronald Storrs points out in his recently published *Memoirs*—are but 'pleasant and harmless phases through which many future pillars of the Church, of the State and even of the Stock Exchange have made their early way'.

"I shall risk being frank with you: think less of what you can do to help others; think more of how you can best fit yourself to help others. At your age, I, too, was imbued with the idea that I must be 'up and doing'. I was old before I realized how infinitely little one can actually do for others, and, now older, I am still trying to convince myself that that infinitely little is infinitely worth the doing,—as I know in my heart it is. One of the most painful discoveries in life is that we cannot make even those whom we love, happy. We can give them momentary pleasure, but happiness is something which each man can create for himself alone, as it is an attitude toward life, and all that life brings, of pain as of pleasure, of beauty as of ugliness. Not even a Master can give us happiness, no matter how greatly he may long to do so."

"I should like to repeat what the Philosopher has been saying, but in somewhat different form", the Historian now remarked. "We were asked, in effect, whether Theosophy always pulls counter to the world. The answer, as I see it, is that if by 'the world' we mean Mammon in the Biblical sense, then Theosophy is everlastingly, immovably opposed to it; but if we mean by 'the world', the tendency of the world's thought at any particular period, the answer will not be intelligible unless based on an understanding of the theosophic doctrine of cycles, which is, as you know" (and he turned to the younger student), "that the entire universe and everything in it moves rhythmically,—not forward in a straight line, and not for ever repeating its performance as 'the eternal return', but after the fashion of a swinging pendulum slowly drawn upwards. If men were content to move with the oscillations of Nature, Theosophy could and would move with them. The trouble is that so many men are bitten with the idea that they can improve upon Nature, and can over-ride the laws of Nature for their own benefit, while the more ambitious and temperamental among them, strive to outdo the normal reactions of the herd, and in that way to shine

as advanced thinkers and leaders. This means that the initiators of thought and action are nearly always extremists,—at one period, violent reactionaries, at another, red-hot radicals; and as extremes of any kind are unwholesome and dangerous, the Lodge and its agents throw their weight, first in one direction, then in the other, in an effort to trim ship and restore the balance. Thus, if H.P.B. were alive and were to write a third volume of *Isis Unveiled*, the result would probably impress some people as a reversal of her earlier effort. It would not be a reversal, but she would undoubtedly redirect her emphasis.

"Finally—so far as I am concerned—every student of Theosophy should serve as a point of contact between the world in which his life is lived, and the teachings of the Masters,—not by talk about those teachings, which are for the very few (hardly any in these days, in my opinion), but by using the clear light of Theosophy to help others to see their own objectives more clearly. If Judge, as he travelled, conversed with a stranger and thought well of him, he would not mention Theosophy or any of its doctrines, but would wait his opportunity to ask, 'What is your purpose in life?' That was enough, regardless of the immediate answer, for he had started that man thinking for himself,—and thinking seriously, because of the immense background of understanding and sympathy which Judge put into his question."

Then the Historian: "Behind, beneath, and above everything you people have been saying, rests the eternal truth that the purpose of life, the real problem of human existence, is *being* rather than doing. I am aware how impossible it is for the vast majority to understand or to believe this; how useless and worse than useless even to suggest it as true; but if we, as students of Theosophy, should ever forget it, we should lose ourselves in a morass of irrelevant confusions, and should certainly fail, among other things, to see the unimportance of the outer activity in comparison with the inner purpose and attitude. I agree with what was said in regard to the improbability of any girl having a mission to raise the tone of business, although all of us, to the last and least, have been entrusted with a mission to raise the tone of any environment in which we find ourselves,—not, as a rule, by preaching, but by example, by being.

"What was the Way of the Master Christ? Thirty years of preparation,—of doing nothing, from the worldly point of view; then three years of work. But we know, if we know anything, that the preparation was as strenuous, that it involved as much effort, as any public event in his suffering life. As a race, we have an astonishing belief in our ability to do things, and to do them efficiently, without preparation. We do not even prepare to die! We learned nothing from the Great War, coming out of it with the cheerful feeling that we had done 'mighty well, considering',—totally unwilling to face the fact that thousands of lives were thrown away for lack of trained officers and a trained staff, as well as for lack of the necessary armament. How dare we attempt to help others solve the problems of their lives without years of preparation and training! Can we not leave that sort of crazy blundering to the untrained deacons and curates let loose upon the world by our Theological

Seminaries,—boys who know nothing of life, nothing of history or literature, nothing of universal experience, nothing of business, but who do not hesitate to interpret Christ as a Social Reformer of the modern type. Too many people as it is, helping others, instructing others, guiding others: do not let us add to their number. Think what a peaceful world it would suddenly become if all reformers, all innovators, all instructors, all lecturers, most of our clergy and all our politicians were suddenly struck dumb. Peace, perfect peace! I would gladly be struck dumb myself, if poor deafened, bewildered, stupefied humanity could thus be saved from the multitudinous roarings of the host I have named. And when they whisper they are sometimes more deadly than when they roar.

"This, my young friend, is not addressed to you, but to the universe at large. I know quite well that it is no part of your thought to join the ranks of such 'helpers'. I sympathize keenly with your problems, which I hope, however, have now in some measure been unravelled. What I am trying to emphasize is the Way of Christ as an example all of us should follow. I wish I had realized its significance when I was younger. But different epochs and periods bring different duties, and to-day there is greater need than ever for outer silence, and—I speak now exclusively to serious students of Theosophy—and for that kind of hushed, expectant indrawal which we read of in the New Testament, when the apostles were waiting for the coming of the Holy Ghost; or, if that be too much to ask for, let us in any case remember what Judge wrote to a pupil in days of storm and stress when the life of the Society itself was in jeopardy: 'Sit still in the midst of all that may be said, inclining only to your duty.' You, personally, may have a vocation unlike that of the older members; but all vocations must be tested in the same way, in the light of the same principles. One and all of us must look to our spiritual Father in Heaven, and obey his call, if we would tread the way of usefulness and peace; and one and all of us must hear that call for ourselves; for while friends may help us to discriminate between the 'still small voice' and the voices of earth, no one can do all our hearing for us, or relieve us entirely of the burden of decision. Beware of the 'wind' and of the 'earthquake' and the 'fire', for they are of the emotional nature and quickly pass. 'In returning (the Hebrew says, 'In sitting still'—Judge's phrase!) and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.' "

"May I add verses which follow yours", said the Ancient, "using, as you did, the Jewish translation from the Hebrew: 'He will surely be gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear, he will answer thee. And though the Lord give you bread sparingly and scant water, yet shall not thy Teacher hide himself any more, but thine eyes shall see thy Teacher; and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying: "This is the way, walk ye in it." ' " And, curiously, as we sat and listened, the voice of the Ancient seemed to come from behind us, full of longing, as though it echoed a plea to turn, that we might see once more the promise of our heart's desire. T.

REVIEWS

Plato To-day, by R. H. S. Crossman, Fellow and Tutor of New College, Oxford; George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London, 1937; price, 7*s.* 6*d.*

The title of this book is misleading. Mr. Crossman imagines Plato suddenly appearing in the modern world, and commenting upon fascism and communism and British society. But Mr. Crossman's "Plato" is a sadly amputated replica of the original. His ruling passion seems to be politics. Even a casual study of the real Plato reveals what was his deepest concern. The great philosopher devoted his life to the search for what is divine and immortal within the nature of man. We shall never understand him, unless we recognize that he was fundamentally a mystic. The famous "theory of ideas" represents an attempt to explain in mental terms the basic datum of universal mystical experience,—that human nature is a blending of divine and animal elements; and that it transfigures or immortalizes itself, in the measure that it embodies its divine prototype, and converts the force within its animal proclivities into aspiration and spiritual energy. Until we grasp something of the meaning of the "theory of ideas", Plato's political speculations in *The Republic* and *The Laws* will be essentially unintelligible. Indeed, during the centuries, they have been worse than unintelligible. Plato started the fashion for Utopias. Doubtless, his intention was merely to construct in theory the constitution of a state founded upon the "natural law" that the wise and the good should rule, and, incidentally, protect the stupid and the weak. Unfortunately, few of his readers have had enough sense of humour to realize that Plato was a master of irony, and did not intend everything that he said to be taken in the most literal sense; unfortunately also, Plato himself seems to have lost his own sense of humour and proportion on at least one occasion, when—if we are to credit history—he attempted, with disastrous and bloody results, to reform the government of Syracuse.

Mr. Crossman may be regarded as part of Plato's "bad karma" for having written *The Republic* for public consumption; for the sum and substance of Mr. Crossman's argument is that Plato was a sort of glorified "university teacher", the first "brain-truster". It is not that Mr. Crossman blames Plato for his "Utopianism" *per se*. That would be most unfair, for Mr. Crossman is a Utopian himself. Indeed, what he objects to is Plato's "realism". Plato was an uncompromising adherent of the aristocratic principle. He could conceive of no

reason why the arduous art of public government should be entrusted to anyone who had not been trained from birth, by an aristocratic code, in the no less arduous art of governing himself. There are interesting resemblances between the "philosopher-kings" of *The Republic* and the "superior man" of Confucius. As Mr. Crossman points out, Plato would not admire the efforts of fascists and nazis and communists to make over the modern world; but it is equally certain that he would be most unfavourably impressed by the theory and practice of modern democracy. And Mr. Crossman's Utopianism is of the democratic order. It is instructive to quote his statement of what he means by democracy, because it illustrates how even a clear and brilliant thinker can surround a word with such a glamorous haze that its original sordid meaning is utterly eclipsed in his mind. After all, democracy really means nothing but government by the *demos*, that is, by or in the name of the mob.

> Democracy (because it is founded upon the infinite possibilities of human nature) must always be on the attack, always on the side of social change against the forces of "law and order", always critical of established institutions and social codes. It knows that without the dynamic of its faith, human society will fall back into oligarchy and injustice. Where faith in the impossible dies, Plato's estimate of human nature becomes correct. But democracy is not a mere ideal, mystically envisaged by a few dreamers; for the belief in the infinite value of human *personality* is also the belief in human *reason*, and at this point the ideal of Jesus is fused with that of Socrates. . . . This appeal to the common sense and to the critical faculty of the ordinary man against the formidable structures of established orthodoxy is the vital force of democratic philosophy. . . . Only when Western civilization has shaken off the shackles of the past and created a new social order worthy of the human dignity of the common man, will democracy and religion be once more realized in human society. Till then both must remain faiths, filled with prophetic anger at the sight of the nations and societies which use their name in vain, and, because they are grounded in the heart of the common man, powerful enough to remove mountains.

It would seem that this panegyric can be boiled down to one "root-idea", that human personality has infinite value. There is a sense in which this is true and there is a sense in which it is false. Like Socrates and the Master Christ, Plato taught that all human nature, *in so far as it is truly human*, is of divine essence. But we do not need the testimony of the sages to know that in too many of its moods and manifestations the "personality" is not human but bestial. This may be deplorable, but it is none the less a fact in Nature, and as history and experience prove again and again, we disregard it at our peril. That is why the democratic "ideal" is, in the last analysis, dangerous nonsense, and no amount of paint and varnish can disguise its essential ugliness. Even in a debased form, an aristocratic standard at least recognizes some distinction between man's actual state and his nobler possibilities. The "human dignity of the common man" becomes apparent when he voluntarily respects superiority and endeavours to emulate it. How otherwise can the "common man" himself ever evolve to the state of the "superior man"? Meanwhile there is a place in the great hierarchical system of Nature, both for the common and for the superior. One hastens to add that forms of government merely reflect the dominant states of consciousness in the body politic. When a society is moved

from within by a powerful and co-ordinated aristocratic nucleus, sooner or later its constitution will become aristocratic. Meanwhile, to try by external means alone to change democracy into something more rational, would be as futile as Plato's alleged effort to convert the politicians of Syracuse into a group of gentlemen, merely by lecturing to them. S.L.

The Science of Prayer, by Michael Bruce, B.Sc.; London, S.P.C.K.; New York, The Macmillan Company, 1937; price, $1.10.

This excellent little book (it can be read in a couple of hours) is brimful of practical and invigorating thought on prayer, by a man who believes to his finger tips that: "Prayer is the most practical thing in life—the most vivid living thing we can do. It is our contact with the Architect of our lives; the power-house from which the energy for all our activities springs."

The Preface states that the book was written originally for Chinese students, and that "Out here [in Shanghai] most educated people still have the exaggerated reverence for science which was so common in Great Britain a few years ago". The author, who has himself had scientific training, accordingly begins with the statement that: "In the course of six years of study in biological laboratories, I never found any conflict between modern science and prayer. On the contrary, I found that my scientific studies led me to a deeper understanding of prayer and drove me to pray more." He then gives the reasons on which he bases his reconciliation of the two points of view (the scientific and the devotional); and explains that his book aims to treat prayer as a science, but with the hope that some of its readers may thereby gain a sufficient grasp of the underlying principles, to go further and, first-hand, to study prayer as an art.

As a framework, he uses these different kinds of prayer: Confession and Forgiveness; Petition; Thanksgiving; Guidance; Adoration; Intercession; and then a section on corporate prayer, and another giving examples of the various methods. So many passages have unusual value that it is better, perhaps, in the limited space of a review, to omit comment and let the book speak for itself —quoting without consecutive plan.

> Prayer not only has a reasonable basis in reality, it is also a growth of mind into truth. . . . All life should be prayer; we want every moment of our lives to be lived in communion with God. . . .
>
> We have seen that the vision of God leads to action. When we realize what God is like, we must throw our lives into fervent co-operation with His will, for there is nothing else in life which is worth doing. We are called to enter into the glory of God, into the magnificence of His creative activity in the universe, and above all into the unfailing love of Jesus. In the face of such a high calling our minds reel. As our vision of God grows clearer, the more awe-inspiring it becomes. . . .
>
> It is well to remember that God's guidance is not given to save us the trouble of hard thinking, nor to encourage us in intellectual laziness; on the contrary he guides us in and through our thinking. . . . It is valuable sometimes to relax our minds in God's presence and allow them to wander where He leads us. . . . If we make time so to wait

upon God, we shall not smother voices through which He might speak to us, and we shall open our minds to new areas over which He may reign.

Adoration, he says, is the centre of prayer and the centre of our life. It is the highest activity of which man is capable. There is nothing in life so real, so utterly true, so tense and active, so clear and illuminating.

To adore a picture of God, of our own making, which is not the true God, is to warp and distort our whole being. We dare not adore if we will not take the trouble to study to know what God is like. We dare not adore unless we have the courage to give every moment of our lives to God. Since God is Love, our adoration, if it be truly adoration of God, will of necessity send us back to sacrifice and service. . . .

We have to choose between being men privileged to be fellow workers with God, and men whose assistance God does not need. It is certain that, if we do not unite our wills with His, He will not need us; but if we do give ourselves to co-operate with His will He will use us, and our intercession will bear fruit under His guidance and according to His will.

Immortality, communion, prayer to the saints, the proper attitude toward and in Church services, corporate worship and so forth, are discussed, all with the basis of his simple, cogent reasoning, which has genuine value whatever be our personal attitude toward those topics. For the most part, the fact of the author's first-hand experience of his subject, while unmistakable, is only implicit in what he writes; but occasionally there is a passage such as the following:

Needless to say, personal and social problems are always coming into my meditations, but I rarely allow them to be my starting point; for, if I do, I frequently find that instead of offering myself to God to do His will, I am instead asking God to give me His assistance in solving my problems. There is to me a constant danger of becoming problem-ridden and losing that sense of certainty and victorious confidence which is the true mark of a Christian. In consequence, I find it better to leave problems of all kinds out of my consideration until I have first steeped my intellect and my imagination in the spirit of Jesus. I go out from His presence to the difficulties of life as a soldier from the presence of a victorious general going to the assault of His enemies, under His command, supported by His strength. I try to see Christ first and problems second: and to see them not as problems, but as the setting in which I am to do His will.

And finally,—

Prayer is to me the very essence of life. From it there flows into everything I do the joy of communion with God, a sense of unity with the heart of the universe, and a sense of the loving companionship of Jesus. I have scarcely got my feet planted on the first rung of the ladder of prayer, but from what I already know I can say that living prayer transfigures the whole of life and makes it significant and purposeful.

R.

Unflinching: A Diary of Tragic Adventure, by Edgar Christian, with an Introduction and Conclusion by B. Dew Roberts and a Preface by Major Hon. J. J. Astor, M. P.; John Murray, London, 1937; price 6*s*.

Edgar Christian, a youth of eighteen, fresh from an English public school and eager for adventure, went with his cousin, Jack Hornby—"Hornby of Hudson Bay"—to winter in the North-West Territory of Canada. The third member of their party was Harold Adlard, a young man of twenty-eight.

They were to explore a new route from Great Slave Lake to Chesterfield Inlet on Hudson Bay. Young Christian's letters, sent during the early stages of their trip, while letters still could be dispatched, and his diary, the record of their winter's isolation, tell the story of the fatal expedition up to a few days before Christian's lonely death, he being the last of the three to perish from weakness and starvation. The diary was found by a patrol of Mounted Police who discovered and buried their bodies.

Jack Hornby, the leader of the expedition, was the youngest son of the famous Lancashire captain and All-England cricketer. Hornby had won the Military Cross in the Great War. He was a seasoned explorer. He knew the wilds and believed he knew the Barren Lands better than any other white man.

To him they were a refuge from the encroaching civilization which he hated. His almost inhuman love of solitude and hardship for its own sake made him an exacting companion on the trail. . . . A deep reserve, which hid a cultured mind and a generous nature, made him silent among strangers and most at his ease in the company of the Indians, Eskimos and trappers among whom his real life had been passed. . . . To him the snow of the North was his native element . . . not an ordeal to be endured in order to add to human knowledge or wealth (Introduction).

The winter after Edgar Christian left school, Hornby was in England. He recognized the boy's fine mettle. To young Christian, Hornby, in turn, was a hero. The boy's devotion never wavered but steadily grew stronger during the last, long months of cruel testing. One of his first letters sent home from Canada, proudly quoted an old friend of Hornby's, "—— any one who is with J. Hornby can never go wrong".

Adlard, third of the triad, had served in the Air Force during the War. He was of less finely tempered steel than the other two, yet he, also, at the end, won Edgar's respect, and after Hornby's death, became "Harold good pal".

Hornby's intention had been to "live on the land". He knew the country and trusted to find their food supply by hunting, trapping, fishing. He knew that risk was involved. "He knew that every adventure worth the name holds a possibility of disaster." The disaster came. Game was scarce, the traps often covered deep with snow, the nets dropped through holes in the ice produced but little catch.

Hornby had been defeated by the incalculable factor which upsets all reckoning between man and the forces of nature. Here it had been some mysterious change in the normal migration of the caribou; a winter exceptionally long even for those regions, driving beast and bird elsewhere and making meat scarce where it should have been plentiful (Introduction).

The quiet sentences of Edgar's diary give the record of their almost hopeless search for food, and of their brave endurance. Only Alvard flinched. At the end of five months, Edgar writes:

April 7th: Jack intended to go out on the Barrens to-day but the wind got up and he could not go. Very warm all day really, but we are so weak and feeble that the slightest wind stops us moving about to hunt. Harold not normal to-day, and thinks he is very bad, but if he would only use some will power to pull through and be more cheery it

would be better for Jack. I cut wood and got water and Jack rested up. Harold cooked bones, etc., and complained all day.

April 8th: Our grub to-day has been pounded bones to make a little soup. . . . We have enough for to-morrow's breakfast and then we might have to eat Wolverine hide if we can get nothing.

April 9th: Jack can hardly move from his bed without pain. I rub his legs and body at times to relieve him. Harold is an awful worry continually saying how bad he is. As far as looks go, the fittest of the bunch of us, but he is too damned afraid of himself and consequently plays another out. I am feeling all right but weak of course to do heavy work and walking.

Then the last brave entry, written, probably, a week or ten days before his own death and after a month of solitary existence:

9 a. m. Weaker than ever. Have food on hand but heart petering? Sunshine is bright now. See if that does any good to me if I get out and bring in wood to make fire to-night. Make preparations now. . . .

Got out, too weak and all in now. Left things late.

Edgar's parents now publish his diary, in the hope, his father, Lieut.-Colonel W. F. Christian, writes, "that it may reach some of the rising generation and inspire them with courage, loyalty and endurance. If this hope is realized, he will not have died in vain."

It sets a noble standard for youth. Yet it should not be restricted to youth. Wherever men and women battle for existence, in a metropolis or on the near side of the Arctic Circle, Edgar Christian's simple, self-forgetful heroism establishes a code of living, a way of meeting, without whining or complaint, the grim facts of the daily struggle.

To those who undertake more, who have started on the soul's adventure, it has equal, if not greater, worth. No parallel can be exact, but the three who faced the hardships on the Thelon, are not unlike the triad who start on the greatest of all adventures,—the adventure which has no real end save through the initiation of death. It is the neophyte's task to win in that last conflict, as we believe Edgar Christian must have won in his lonely battle with physical death; his leader no longer present to show the way; when, the self-pity of the lower nature in the triad for ever stilled, he, the soul, having had his first ardour tempered by rigorous trial, and made strong in loyalty, in love, in courage, meets—and conquers—Death. J.L.M.

On the Way to Perignan, by Jennings C. Wise (author of *The Long Arm of Lee; The Turn of the Tide; The Great Crusade*, etc.); The Paisley Press, Inc., New York, 1937; price, $2.50.

This is a novel. It is impossible for the reviewer to write of it with impartiality or detachment. Its author is a personal friend. All of it, therefore, was read with great interest, sympathy, and enjoyment. We should be delighted if it were to become a "best seller"; we ask our many readers to inquire for it at the Libraries and at the book shops they patronize. S. S. McClure, founder and editor of *McClure's Magazine*, says of it:

Pictures from the book are constantly coming back to my mind. It is filled with little masterpieces. There are certain pictures that seem to me perfect. . . . I remember many of the characters and events just as if they had actually occurred. . . . The book has become in a sense, a part of my experience with people.

The author introduces two Sages, who guide the intellectual and spiritual development of the young man who is the central character of the story. On one occasion the youth, in our opinion, showed himself far wiser than the Sage, by *not* following the Sage's advice (pp. 159-161); but that is a detail,—and in any case the other Sage compensates for this by presenting him with a copy of Charles Johnston's translation of the *Gîta*, which is quoted approvingly at some length. So it goes. There are vivid sketches of persons and places—an old-time Southern Colonel, a New England schoolmaster, a Parisian *grisette*. A running commentary on public events as the story unfolds, distinctly adds to the interest, although some critics will doubtless object to such comment as superfluous and even as intrusive in a novel. Yet what is an author to do nowadays when his real purpose is to bring certain ideas to public attention? People will not read essays or similar forms of serious literature; they will read novels: so, to reach the many, into the form of a novel ideas must be cast. We recommend the book to the attention of English publishers as well as to American readers. T.

Handicaps: Six Studies, by Mary MacCarthy; Longmans, Green & Co., New York; price, $2.40.

The author of this charming little book says in her preface that she does not pretend to write full biographies of the six persons here studied, but only to describe them in relation to their infirmities, with the hope that their heroic qualities may inspire others who are struggling against handicaps. The six persons are Mary Lamb, Beethoven, Arthur Kavanagh, Henry Fawcett, W. E. Henley and Robert Louis Stevenson.

The trials and tribulations of Mary Lamb, Beethoven and Stevenson must be familiar to most readers, though it must always be helpful to be reminded of them. Mary Lamb was afflicted with spells of violent madness during which she had to be incarcerated. When she felt a fit coming upon her, she and her brother would walk together to the asylum. Beethoven, after years of poverty and strain, became deaf, and could no longer hear music. Stevenson suffered from tuberculosis. Henley, also, the author of the well-known poem *Invictus*, had tuberculosis of the foot and endured great pain.

The life of Arthur Macmorrough Kavanagh (1831-1889) was an extraordinary one. He was born without hands or feet. He soon grew up to be such a charming child that every one loved him. One of his childhood friends writes: "Even as children we could not but wonder at his cheerful submission to his many annoyances and discomforts; but he had a fine unselfish nature, and was grandly submissive in his sense of privation." He learned to ride, strapped to a chair on horseback, and became an intrepid horseman and hunter. He had a steel

hook attached to his arm and learned to do everything for himself with it. He even managed to write a clear and beautiful script, which very few people with two good hands take the trouble to do. Kavanagh's mother seems to have been an unusual woman. She refused to let him stay sheltered at home, but took him and his elder brother with their tutor, on long journeys to the Continent, to Egypt and to Palestine. Arthur learned Arabic in Egypt. His brother says: "At Damascus, when riding through the Bazaars, Arthur encountered a number of Bedouin and Arab sheiks whom he got acquainted with in the desert and with whom he is a great favourite. As soon as they saw him they all ran up, and kissed him on both cheeks."

Later, the two boys went from Russia through Kurdistan into Persia and India. They were the first western travellers, up to that time, to come out of Kurdistan alive. In Persia, Arthur contracted a fever and was nursed back to health in the Harem of the Prince Mirza, quite an Arabian Night's Tale. In India, Tom fell ill and was sent to Australia for his health. Arthur had spent all his money on his brother's passage, and, as no money came to him from Ireland, he was penniless until he obtained a post as carrier of dispatches from one Indian station to another. He remained in India for two years, when, owing to the death of his two brothers, he became head of his family and returned to Ireland. There, he married a charming young woman and became the model of a country gentleman and landlord, and a Member of Parliament.

He was deeply religious and possessed all his life that sense of spiritual unity which is the essence of faith; a mystical sense that this life is but a part of something greater than itself was constantly present with him. He had a gift of silent prayer that all his life seemed to bring a particular harmony to him at difficult times when he was in sore need of comfort.

Henry Fawcett (1833-1884) was a brilliant and ambitious young student at Cambridge, when he was instantaneously blinded by a charge of shot fired accidentally by his father. "The idea came to him, ten minutes after the accident, that he would do, as far as lay in his power, everything he had set himself to do in life, in spite of blindness." He learned to ride, skate, swim and fish, and went on with his studies at the university, by listening to reading and by dictating. At the age of thirty, he was elected Professor of Political Economy for the University of Cambridge. Two years later, he became a Member of Parliament, and at the age of forty-six, he was made Postmaster-General of England. He married a young woman who said that she "enjoyed the whole of her married life".

No one can read these little studies of handicaps without being moved by admiration or without being inspired to bear his own trials, whatever they may be, with more fortitude. The author says: "All these characters coming out of the past, express themselves each in the manner of their own time; but disaster to the human frame never goes out of fashion, and my hope certainly was that it might be an encouragement to read about some, who, in various ways, according to their powers, managed to make the best of a bad business. Their courage is for all time."

ST.C. LAD.

Biological Time, by P. Lecomte du Noüy, Chief of the Division of Molecular Biophysics, Pasteur Institute, Paris; with Foreword by Alexis Carrel, M. D.; the Macmillan Company, New York, 1937; price, $2.00.

Time is a fact which most of us take for granted without reflection. If the man in the street were asked what it really is, he would probably reply that it is "something" measured by clocks. However, the more thoughtful man soon begins to realize that there is more than one kind of time. There is, of course, the time of our clocks which is based upon the observation of the cycles of the heavenly bodies and depends upon the various motions of the earth. There is Newton's "absolute, true, and mathematical time conceived as flowing at a constant rate, unaffected by the speed or slowness of the motions of material things". There is Minkowski's geometrical time conceived as the "fourth dimension". There is Bergson's theory of time as duration in consciousness and as inseparable from memory and from creative effort. There is Plato's mystical definition that time is a "moving image of eternity".

The "biological time" which is the subject of this book, seems to correspond most nearly to Bergson's "duration". We know that our sense of time is not constant. A dream lasting five minutes may seem interminable to the dreamer. A year may seem three times longer to a child than to an adult. M. Lecomte du Noüy correlates these subjective experiences with the changing velocity of physiological processes, as the physical organism ages. He invented during the Great War a method of calculating the ratio between the speed with which wounds heal and the age of the patient. There can be no doubt that this ratio exists, and that there is an equivalent ratio between ageing, and the accumulation of poisons in the blood-serum. This change in the velocity of living reflects a similar change in the velocity of thought and emotion. As Dr. Carrel remarks: "Parents and children live in different temporal worlds. They are separated by a gap that often is too large to be bridged, even by illusions." The significance of the author's experiments is manifest. Unfortunately, he obtained much of his information by animal vivisection, and even under complete anæsthesia and the most favourable conditions, vivisection is an incipient form of the "black art" and, morally, wholly illegitimate.

M. Lecomte du Noüy is singularly free from the cut-and-dried mechanism which is so fashionable to-day in biological circles. He has the lucidity and the breadth of vision which are typical of the French savant at his best.

Even to a superficial observer, our internal physiological time does not seem to flow at a constant rate within the frame of external sidereal time. Real age, as we have seen, can differ from legal age. From a psychological point of view, the value of a day is not identical for ephemeral insects and for animals that live to be sixty years old. Even for one individual, this value seems to vary during the course of life. Our duration would therefore be, in a certain measure, independent of sidereal time. Each human being constitutes a universe in a state of continuous transformation. It is the rate of this transformation which can be considered as characteristic of our brief specific duration, of our physiological time itself, inseparable from our consciousness. . . . Time in its essence, implies memory and thought, or in other words: consciousness. In reality consciousness could be defined as the power to perceive things separately in succession. From this

standpoint, time has been called an internal mode of perception. . . . "In truth it is impossible to distinguish between duration no matter how short, which separates two instants, and a memory which binds them together, for duration is essentially a continuation of what is no more in what is. This is the true time, I mean the time perceived and lived. It is also every kind of conceived time, for it is impossible to conceive time without depicting it as perceived and lived. Duration, then, implies consciousness, and we put consciousness into things by the very fact that we attribute to them a time which lasts." One might almost say that these ideas of Bergson are contained implicitly in Descartes' phrase: "I think; hence I am."

One notes with astonishment the phenomenon of a "molecular biophysicist" quoting Bergson with approval. It measures the extent of the revolution which has displaced so many of the dogmas of scientific materialism during the past twenty-five years. It may be suggested that if all the implications involved in the concept of biological time were realized, biologists would be obliged to admit the universality of consciousness. If duration be inseparable from consciousness, it should follow that anything which *endures* in Nature, even for an infinitesimal fraction of a second, must be conscious in some way and degree. In other words, the whole Universe can be reduced, in the last analysis, to an inconceivably vast congeries of states of consciousness; for we cannot imagine any existing thing which is without the attribute of duration. Not without reason the Magi of Persia symbolized the Absolute Consciousness of God by the name, *Zeroana Akerne*, or "Boundless Time". L.V.

CORRESPONDENCE

German Atrocities

To the Editors of the Theosophical Quarterly:

As the result of skilful propaganda persistently carried on since the Armistice by Germans and pro-Germans, but especially by those who hate France and England on general principles, the impression is wide-spread in America, and even in England, that the Bryce Report and other proofs of German atrocities during the Great War, were the result of deliberate invention. As I happen to know that some of the worst of the German atrocities have never been made public, and that those, such as the Dinant massacre, revealed in the Bryce Report, actually happened, I ask you to publish, in the interest of truth, a footnote from *My New World* (pages 93, 94, 95), the latest book by the Abbé Ernest Dimnet, so well and favourably known to English-speaking readers as the author of *France Herself Again*, *The Art of Thinking*, *What We Live By*, and other works.

Some of your readers may wish to know that *My New World* is a continuation of the Abbé's *My Old World*, and consists for the most part of a delightful and appreciative account of his several visits to America, during the second of which, after many initial rebuffs, he succeeded in raising over one hundred thousand dollars on behalf of the University of Lille, the laboratories and dis-

pensaries of which the Germans had gutted when they were finally driven out of northern France in 1918. This is the footnote:

"On August 16th and 17th, 1914, no fewer than six hundred and seventy-four men and women, citizens of the charming summer-resort of Dinant [Belgium], as well as several children, were shot by the Germans against a wall which I pass almost every year and never can see without a feeling of horror. There are still alive in the pretty little city several thousand people who witnessed the gruesome scene. The German soldiers broke into the houses and dragged out whomever they found there. Immediately after, the terrified prisoners were driven to the wall and shot down without even an appearance of judgment. The Germans admit the facts but account for them by the repeated assertion that civilians shot at them, a statement which all Dinant people indignantly contradict. I have always been surprised that some American searcher, less likely than his European confrères to bring into such an investigation a partisan spirit, should not have collected the evidence which can still be easily gathered both from Dinant citizens and from German veterans. A reference to this massacre in the last edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* is so casual that the reader wonders if the writer of the Dinant article believed in the actuality of the facts he relates. People in England and in America have been made so sceptical by conflicting propagandas that they have adopted an 'it-may-be-so-but-it-also-may-not' attitude which is the greatest achievement of the propagandist. One is rather surprised to find the same even in serious books by real historians. In the early editions of *The Epic of America*, Mr. James Truslow Adams wrote (page 370): 'The French executed two war nurses under almost the identical circumstances of the German execution of Nurse Cavell, but we were not told.' This is a typical statement revealing the state of mind I was alluding to above. The natural reaction of a French reader who never heard of this shooting of two German nurses was to ask: 'But where could the French get hold of two German nurses to shoot?' I wrote to Mr. Adams asking for his authorities. Let me say at once that the correspondence which followed was entirely to the credit of Mr. Adams. He had found the two German nurses' story on page 32 of *Propaganda Technique in the World War* by Professor H. D. Lasswell, of Chicago, and he had not questioned it till a letter, written shortly before mine, by former Ambassador Jusserand, raised doubts in his mind. He had then written Professor Lasswell asking him about his sources. Professor Lasswell had replied regretting 'that Mr. Adams' letter had not reached him a fortnight sooner as he had just returned to the University from Germany and his evidence for his statement was there.' This letter was dated December 7th, 1932. I wrote immediately to Professor Lasswell asking him to give me the address of *any* German information bureau as the shooting of the German nurses, if it had really taken place, must be well-known in Germany. My letter did not reach Professor Lasswell. After waiting a few months I wrote to him again and received the following answer (dated June 2nd, 1933) which I communicated at once to Mr. James Truslow Adams: 'The story, as related in my *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, is practically a verbatim quota-

tion from Mr. Karl von Wiegand, a German-American. He was head of one of Mr. Hearst's news-gathering organizations, the Universal Service, who was on close terms with the Germans. He referred to Oberst Nicolai.' Mr. Adams did not think that evidence of this kind, ultimately based on the *obiter dictum* of an Oberst about whom nobody ever heard, was sufficient to satisfy the requirements of history, and he acted as a real scholar was sure to act. He not only deleted the allusion to the German nurses from the new editions of *The Epic of America*, but he added a note without which the suppression might have been unnoticed. Unfortunately he could not send an *erratum* to the hundreds of thousands who had previously read his book, and I still meet Americans who, believing that the French shot two defenceless German women, feel like condoning such things as the Dinant massacre, because 'in war everything is horrible.' So it is, but there are degrees in horror and it behoves history to establish such degrees. The moment an historian seeks to give the contrary impression he falls to the rank of propagandist. I hope I have not more than the inevitable amount of racial prejudices. Many people who are violently in favour of, or antagonistic to, some foreign nation substitute emotions for reasons and can have no intellectual standing. I am only telling what I saw, and I saw with my own eyes the effects of *Schrecklichkeit*. The terrorized Belgians who, in August, 1914, made such a ghastly entrance into my native town were the victims of a system of frightfulness which Germany openly defended at the time and practised ruthlessly. I know scores of other instances less striking than the Dinant slaughter but equally shocking. To deny is not to delete them."

OLD MEMBER.

THE MARINES AT CHÂTEAU-THIERRY

To the Editors of the Theosophical Quarterly:

In "The Screen of Time", October, 1936, one of the speakers remarks: "Yes. The American marines were the first unit to take the aggressive,—at Château-Thierry (Belleau Wood) in June, 1918." This statement is frequently found in current publications, the fair inferences being that the American marines constituted a combat unit; that the active participation of American troops in offensive operations began with the action of the marines; and that what took place at Belleau Wood and at Château-Thierry in June, 1918, constituted one and the same episode. This chain of misunderstanding is the outgrowth of widespread propaganda during the early days of our participation in the War —many readers will remember the popular myth that Paris had been saved from the Germans by a few marines; may remember also a narrative entitled, "With the Help of God and a Few Marines", published by a Colonel of marines who had been wounded at Belleau Wood.

In fairness to the Allies with whom we served and also to the American regulars with whom the marines were associated, it seems well to keep in remembrance certain of the facts. Two regiments of marines, the 5th and 6th, were assigned to the 2nd U. S. Division which sailed for France in December, 1917.

With them in that division were the 9th and the 23rd infantry, three artillery regiments, also engineers and auxiliary units. Little mention has been made of any but the marines, though they constituted only a fourth of the Division. In November, 1917, the 1st U. S. Division (the first combat unit to reach France and one that included no marines) had entered the trenches in the Vosges for instruction by the French. This 1st U. S. Division, supported by a large mass of French artillery and backed up by French reserves, delivered what was in fact the first attack ever made by American troops upon the enemy. Skilfully conducted, it was entirely successful. Moreover, some American engineer troops had already displayed great tenacity in the fighting on the British front. In the operations about Château-Thierry and Belleau Wood, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd U. S. Divisions were all employed, and without belittling the part played by any one unit, it is most desirable to keep each in its proper perspective: to realize that they were used to *assist* the French to stabilize a new line of resistance along the Marne; that over thirty reserve divisions of seasoned French troops were interposed at the time between Château-Thierry and Paris; and that while to our men it seemed (as it practically always seems to troops advancing into a strange country) that they were acting alone with no one on their flanks,—in reality, they were but part of a great and ordered whole, no part of which could claim the distinction of having stood solely between Paris and disaster. Finally, no marines were employed at Château-Thierry, and when they did go into action at Belleau Wood, it was after the infantry units had become involved. F.T.S.

There is a choice in books as in friends, and the mind sinks or rises to the level of its habitual society.—LOWELL.

Read the best books first, or you may not have a chance to read them at all.—THOREAU.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION No. 405.—*How does one know when one is functioning in the inner, instead of in the outer, world? Where is the boundary between the two? Are there really two separate and distinct worlds, the inner and the outer? Or, are these simply two aspects of the One World,—the spiritual?*

ANSWER.—We are never out of the Spiritual world,—it is the One World. It is only a question as to whether we are consciously functioning there, or whether we are not. We may be immersed in outer events and activities, and lose all consciousness of the Spiritual world. Or, instead of living amidst outer events, we may be living within them, and be finding at their heart their true meaning, and Reality. C.R.A.

ANSWER.—Scarcely anyone can fail to have had, at some time and in one way or another, the experience of functioning in the inner world. His failure to recognize it, as such, is due to lack of awareness at that point. If he had used his intelligence properly to analyze his experience, he would have *known*, self-consciously, the nature of that experience. The boundary line between the two worlds—so designated to make the distinction clear in words—surely must be within his own Manas, or mind. We do not move *in space* from the outer to the inner world. The transition is in consciousness. Though the detail of the experience differs with different persons, in essence it is similar: response to the spirit within. There are those, for instance, who have passed from depression to joy, from boredom to sudden wonder and rapture, at the song of a bird, or the vision of the delicate tracery of green leaves in early spring. We do not move out of the physical world in order to experience what lies at its heart. The song of the bird, the leafage of the trees, are outer aspects, if you will, of the spirit within. The moment of joy, of wonder and rapture, is the moment of entrance into the inner world. The extent to which we can penetrate into that world, is infinite in its reaches. On the strength of our imagination in reiterating the experience, on the force of our will in living a life that will purify the heart, on our love of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful, depends our progress. If the imagination and the will remain sustained and right-pointed, a time will come when we shall live in both worlds, so called, at once: *acting* in the outer, while *actuated* by the love and loyalty which unite us to those of the inner realm. Then, we shall see the inner and the outer, not falsely, as two separate and distinct worlds, but truly, as two aspects of the One,—the Spiritual, or Real, world. G.M.W.K.

ANSWER.—Broadly speaking, the universe is divided into two worlds—the world of Idea (the higher), and the world of Matter (the lower). The lower world is formed on its prototype—the higher world; and everything in the lower is but an image, or reflection, of the higher. "As above, so below." Theosophy stresses unity, and holds that, in essence, the universe is one. But in manifestation there is duality—two aspects of the One Reality. The material world is but the outer rind, so to speak, of the spiritual. The Kabalists call the material universe the World of Shells. The materialist lives, moves and has his being in matter; he mistakes the shadow for the substance.

Theosophy opens doors to the spiritual world—the world of Causes, of Ideation, of Divine Purpose. The materialist deals only with effects. At our 1937 Convention, it was stated that

perhaps the greatest need of the Society is a clearer realization of the inner world as the world of reality; that thoughts are things, that they are things of tremendous power; and that invariably throughout the universe the unseen is more powerful than the visible. How many of us give more than intellectual assent to that truth? How many act upon it? The secret of knowing in which world one is functioning lies in consciousness. Where are our thoughts centred? Do we, in going about our daily tasks, undertake them as part of the Divine plan for us, with the motive of offering up every thought, every act, upon the altar of the heart? Or, are our thoughts centred in self?

"Fragments", in the QUARTERLY for July, 1935, offers a key for the discovery of the boundary between the two worlds:

"Who knows where earth begins and heaven ends; who can fix the boundary of that inner world and this, determine what is seen and what unseen?

"Why grant a boundary between ourselves and heaven? What boundary can there be, save sin?

"Living in heavenly-mindedness, we shall make earth one with heaven, remove the veil, nor know which pavement, whether clay or gold, we tread." G.H.M.

ANSWER.—The inner world is the world of purpose, and the spiritual world is the world of Divine purpose. Whatever is carrying out the Divine purpose, whatever is living in accordance with the laws of its being, striving to carry out to the best of its ability the purpose for which it was created, is in the spiritual world. A tree or a flower, growing as it was meant to grow, is in the spiritual world. Part of the Divine purpose must surely be the manifestation on earth of the Platonic trinity, Beauty, Truth and Goodness; whatever manifests them is helping to carry out this purpose, and is, to that extent, in the spiritual world. On the other hand, disobedience removes automatically from that world whatever disobeys. It ceases to be connected with the purpose that created and constitutes it.

In speaking of such a subject as the spiritual world, we must be careful to make clear that we are dealing with only one aspect. That world transcends description. It is as if a man who had seen one little corner of Devonshire, were asked to describe England, and faithfully described his little spot. From one point of view, he would be right in calling it England, but as a portrayal of the country, it would, to say the least, be inadequate. The same thing is true of any attempt to say what the spiritual world is, or is not. In so far as we are honestly striving to carry out the Divine purpose, the will of the Masters, we are functioning in the inner, spiritual world. In so far as we are self-indulgent, we exile ourselves from that world. It is love that is back of all purposes of the Divine. It follows, therefore, that love, love of something other than self, is the only motive that will enable us to enter the spiritual world.

J.F.B.M.

NOTICE

The regular meetings of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society are held on alternate Saturday evenings, at 64 Washington Mews, which runs from the east side of Fifth Avenue, midway between Eighth Street and Washington Square, North. No. 64 is the first studio east of Fifth Avenue, on the north side of the Mews. The meetings begin at half-past eight, and close at ten o'clock.

During the present Quarter, there will be meetings on,—

January 15th and 29th
February 12th and 26th
March 12th and 26th.

Out-of-town members of the Society are invited to attend these meetings whenever they are in New York. Visitors who may be interested in Theosophy are always welcome.